# National Identity in South African Children's Literature

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of a Masters of Philosophy in African Studies.

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**COMPULSORY DECLARATION**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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# UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

# GRADUATE SCHOOL IN HUMANITIES

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# Abstract

National identity is an important characteristic of a country and helps to create a sense of national unity between its citizens. Identity is a learned concept that develops at a young age from children's surroundings and interactions. According to Martyn Barrett, this sense of National identity is present as early as the age of 5, with children gaining greater understanding of the significance of national identity to the age of 11. During this time period, picture books play a major role in childhood development. Using picture books to help create a positive, unified sense of national identity and multicultural understanding can help a nation to create a socially stable environment that influences political and economic development. In the case of South Africa, national identity has shifted since the end of the apartheid era, but how it is reflected within children's picture books? This mini-dissertation examines six different children's picture books to ascertain whether or not elements of national identity are included and if these elements are able to create a positive shift in national identity within South African society. The elements of national identity to be examined include, but are not limited to, South African plants and animals that are native/ unique to South Africa, important South African figures, shared history, multiculturalism, and also hope for the future. By examining these elements and other external influences, an image of South African national identity as represented in children's picture books is explored. This leads to an understanding of the role that children's picture books can play in the South African education system and child development.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the relevance of the study of South African children's literature in national identity formation in order to understand how children's literature can help to develop an overarching sense of national identity. I examine the role that children's literature plays in early childhood development and how that role can be utilized in the relation to the development of national identity.

### 1.1 Introduction

The national identity of a country carries a significant weight in creating a sense of unity between its citizens. This sense of cohesiveness as a nation is the foundation through which a socially stable environment can be created, which in turn affects its political and economic development. Without a sense of an overarching national identity, a nation can face problems of social instability. In culturally diverse nations, like those found on the African continent, social instability has been exploited for political gains not only during colonialism, but also in the post-colonial period. This causes violence and decreased economic development through the method of 'divide and rule'. An overarching sense of unified national identity may not be able to eradicate social instability altogether, but it is a step to help prevent the divide and conquer techniques from further exploiting social instability.

In order to create a sense of unified national identity, the old stereotypes have to be overcome, which is easiest at the developmental stage of identity. The development of national identity occurs when children are starting to comprehend both self and the world around them. According to Martyn Barrett:

> In a number of studies, we have found that children are able to talk about their membership of their own national group by 5 years of age. In addition, we have found that the importance which children attribute to their national identity increases significantly between 5 and 11 years of

> age. The degree of perceived similarity between the self and the national type also increases between these stages.[1]

A significant channel through which this sense of national identity can be developed early on is through the use of children's literature.

One way that children's literature plays a direct role in identity formation is in cognitive and affective behavior, which described in relation to national identity by Martyn Barrett. Who explains that:

> At the cognitive level, it [identity formation] involves knowledge of the existence of the national group, knowledge of the national geographical territory, knowledge of the national emblems, customs, traditions, historical events and historical figures which symbolically represent the nation, beliefs about the typical characteristics of members of the national group, and beliefs about how similar the self is to the national type. At the affective level, the sense of national identity involves a subjective sense of belonging to the national community, feelings towards people who make up the national group, numerous social emotions such as national pride and national shame, and an emotional attachment to the national homeland.[2]

The diverse elements that make up the cognitive level of knowledge and the affective level of knowledge are included within each of the six books herein chosen for analysis. However, the affective level of knowledge is harder to represent within a picture book then the cognitive level due to the individual interpretive nature of emotions.

Children's literature plays a role in cognitive development by helping to advance the development of the child's perception of their national identity. According to Harris, "Cognitive development is enhanced when children read literature. For example, extensive reading of literature increases vocabulary levels, offers opportunities to acquire



[1] Barrett, Martyn. (2000). "The Development of National Identity in Childhood and Adolescence." *Conference papers from the Department of Psychology.* Paper 5. http://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/psyconferencepapers/5. (12/01/2010).
[2] Ibid.

and practice reading skills, models language patterns, and sparks imagination."[3] Children's literature shapes national identity development through its role in primary socialization by utilizing cognitive development.

One way that children's literature can be used as a tool within primary socialization is by reaching into the child's imagination. This allows for the exploration of worlds outside of their own, providing the child with safe environments for negotiating their own identity in the world they live. The book world:

> […] is a domain in which they can enter the consciousness of others, play with ways of behaving and explore what they think is right. Literature's strength is in revealing different perspectives, ambiguities and human contradictoriness when it encourages questions to which there are no easy answers. At the same time, readers are encouraged to imagine the consequences of human actions.[4]

By, 'entering the consciousness of others,' as Naidoo states, children are able to gain an understanding of what it is like to be someone different from themselves. This helps to develop a diverse understanding of the world they live in. The diverse understanding and the ability to provide a safe environment for negotiating identity is one aspect of how children's literature can help shape the development of an overarching national identity.

Additionally, children's literature is seen as important tool in the development of children because of the messages it can convey. For, children's literature, "is usually purposeful, its intention being to foster in the child reader a positive apperception of some socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shared by the author and audience. These values include contemporary morality and ethics, a sense of what is valuable in the culture's past, and aspirations about the present and future. Since a culture's future is, to put it crudely, is invested in its children."[5] Many of these purposefully written intentions in children's books are required for the development of both national and individual identity. With the case of children's picture books it takes the complex subject area of



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[3] Harris, Violet J. (1990). "Benefits of Children's Literature." *The Journal of Negro Education.* Vol. 59, No. 4 Autumn, p 538.

[4] Naidoo, Beverley. (2005). "One Fragile World: Boundaries and Crossings as Reader and Writer." In O'Sullivan, Emer; Reynolds, Kimberly; Romøren (eds). *Children's Literature Global and Local: Social and Aesthetic Perspectives*. Oslo: Novus Press, p 48-9.

[5] Stephens, John. (1992). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction.* London: Longman, p 3.

socio-cultural values and makes them accessible to young children when concepts of identity are forming.

For this study on South African children's literature and national identity, I intend to examine children's picture books of various genres and their roles in national identity formation. The genres that I specifically address are biography, historical fiction, poetry, and contemporary realistic fiction. The reason for using children's picture books is because they are one of the earliest encounters with books for most children, between the ages of four and eight, presented at a time when children are learning about their place in the world. Thus far, the prevalent areas of studies on national identity and South African children's literature have focused on young adult literature and have neglected picture books.

This study is relevant because children's literature is a valuable tool in helping create a positive sense of unified national identity. The earlier a child is exposed to elements of national identity, especially within a culturally diverse nation, he or she is better able to develop an understanding and respect for different cultures, both within and outside the country. This eases the road for a multi-ethnic nation to build a socially and politically stable environment, which is critical to reconciliation in a country that has come through, not only colonialism, but also the destructive nature of the apartheid regime. For these reasons I will be focusing on children's picture books that are designed for the ages between four and eight. Even though this study is only examining South African children's literature, the principles behind the study can be applied outside of South Africa, especially to nations that experience similar ethnic and cultural fragmentation.

## Chapter 2: Theories of National Identity and South African National Identity

In this chapter, I explore the theories behind national identity creation and the current state of South Africa's national identity. First, I will address the theories and debates on national identity through the work of three influential commentators of the twentieth century: Ernest Gellner, Stuart Hall, and Benedict Anderson. This examination will establish a background for the current debate in the field of South African national identity. Then, I will look at the current state of South Africa's national identity and some of the nation-building programs that have been put in place via government.

### 2.1National Identity and Nationalism

There are three main commentators that have shaped the debates on national identity and nationalism in the post-structuralist movement. These three commentators are: Gellner, Hall, and Anderson. An examination of their work will provide a background for the analysis of the creation of South African national identity and overall analysis of national identity and nationalism. Even though this study focuses on national identity, the issue of nationalism must also be addressed since it is on the extreme of the national identity spectrum. National identity usually refers to traditions, culture, politics, history and language creating the image of a nation as a unit. Nationalism is an extreme form of national identity that can create further problems in culturally diverse societies. It would not reduce social instability but rather increase it, which could have devastating affects on countries like South Africa.



### 2.1a Ernest Gellner

Gellner focused his work within the area of nationalism and its development. This has had implications on the national identity debate around the world. Nationalism is defined by Gellner as:

> [A] theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular,

> that ethnic boundaries within a given state—a contingency already formally excluded by the principle in its general formulation—should not separate the power-holders from the rest.[6]

The key to Gellner's definition of nationalism is that the concept of the state cannot be taken for granted. This is because the state is a construction of industrial society, which is not universal. Instead, culture and social organization create nationalism as a by-product. Gellner argues that: "Culture and social organizations are universal and perennial. States and nationalism are not."[7] This limited definition does not allow for development of culturally plural societies like South Africa because it does not allow for political boundaries to cut across ethnic boundaries within the same state.

Gellner's theory on the creation of nationalism is rooted in a society's transition from agrarian to industrial. Yet, Gellner believes that industrial society eradicates cultural differences by weakening social niches. According to him:

> This then is the crucial, insightful and exceedingly persuasive premise, shared alike by classical Marxism, classical liberal theory, and also by a great deal of modern social theory: the work conditions of industrial society […] erode those very structures which sustain cultural difference. Cultural differences will be flattened out by the bulldozer of industrial production. Ethnicity consists of overlapping, mutually reinforcing cultural differences. So ethnicity will go down the drain, alongside these cultural differences which make it visible, and are of its essence.[8]

With reduced cultural differences, a shared 'high' culture, versus the multiple 'low' cultures of the agrarian society, can be formed. While this may be true in societies around the world, in South Africa's case the apartheid regime was constantly reinforcing cultural differences at all racial and ethnic levels. This contradicts the theory that work conditions of industrial societies reduce cultural differences, a belief which is shared by Marxist theorist.

Gellner's rejection of the Marxist connection between modernity and capitalism is because history shows the modernity-nationalism relationship, and that Marx discarded

[6] Gellner, Ernest. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism, Second Edition,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p 1.
[7] Gellner, Ernest. (1997). Nationalism, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p 5.
[8] Gellner, Ernest. (1994). *Encounters with Nationalism,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p 37.

the evolutionary approach. In essence, "Gellner […thinks] of modernity as a distinctive form of social organization and culture. He […considers] nationalism to be a function of modernity."[9] In his view, nationalism cannot produce modernity, but is a product of it. Additionally, current society cannot be constructed from traditions of the past that have survived in the present. This is directly related to Gellner's view of what nationalism is not, since "nationalism is *not* the awakening of an old, latent, dormant force, though that is how it does indeed present itself. It is in reality the consequence of a new form of social organization, based on deeply internalized, education-dependent high cultures, each protected by its own state."[10]

South Africa, and the continent as a whole, would be in violation of the nationalist principles explained above. This violation is because of the artificial borders created during colonialism. Gellner, confirms the violation, explaining that the, "political boundary of a given state can fail to include all the members of the appropriate nation; or it can include them all but also include some foreigners; or it can fail in both ways at once, not incorporating all the nationals and yet also including some non-nationals."[11] South Africa fits within the last category that Gellner describes. In addressing the issue of foreign rule and ethnicity in relation to nationalism, he says, "The requirement is that the boundaries of ethnicity should also be the boundaries of the political unit, and, above all, that the rulers within that unit should be of the same ethnicity as the ruled. Foreigners, at any rate in large numbers, are unwelcome in the political unit, and quite particularly unwelcomed as *rulers*."[12] This occurrence is that has been seen in African settler colonies, as well as, in cases of political coup d'états in African nations based on ethnic rivalries.

For these reasons, Gellner's definition of nationalism showcases the dangers of what can be referred to as overt nationalism. This type of nationalism is what was experienced after the World War I. Most notably, in German, anyone outside the national in-group was unjustly persecuted, while those within were given the belief of superiority to all other cultures. This extreme form of national identity is no longer seen as desirable



[9] Breuilly, John. (2006). "Introduction." In Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism, Second Edition,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p xx.
[10] Gellner, Ernest. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism, Second Edition,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p 46.
[11] Ibid, p 1.
[12] Gellner, Ernest. (1994). *Encounters with Nationalism,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p 35.

and would have devastating effects on culturally diverse societies like South Africa. Thus, nationalism as Gellner describes is to be avoided within children's literature, as it would have a negative impact on creating a unified sense of national identity.

### 2.1b Stuart Hall

Hall focused his work in the field of identity and representation through the dismantling of the old images and terms surrounding identity and representation. Hall addresses what he sees as a shift from 'relations of representation' to the 'politics of representation.' This shift has changed the way in which both identity and the representation of identity are perceived. To understand the 'politics of representation' one has to understand what Hall means by the term representation. It is the domain where meaning is constructed. For him:

> "[E]vents, relations, structures do have conditions of existence and real effects, outside the sphere of the discursive, but that it is only within the discursive, and subject to its specific conditions, limits and modalities, do they have or can they be constructed within meaning."[13]

Because representation requires the discursive to gain meaning, it is connected to areas of subjectivity, identity, and politics. Children's literature provides a mode to translate representation into the discursive in a manner that children can understand.

This shift in the way which representation is conceived has led to the end of the 'essential black subject,' and allows for the realization of multiple diversities. For:

> [T]he recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subject positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'; that is, the recognition that 'black' is essentially a politically and culturally *constructed* category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature.[14]

[13] Hall, Stuart. (1996a). "New Ethnicities." In David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (ed). *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* London: Routledge, p 443.
[14] Ibid, p 443.

Such a realization is important in the case of South Africa and its struggle with past the racial categories. By understanding that color is not what creates someone, but, 'subject positions, social experiences and cultural identities,' as Hall states, societies can move past the color issue. I further how this realization can be applied to children's literature in Chapter 4: Analysis of Selected Picture Books.

Along with the deconstruction of the 'essential black subject' Hall attempts to deconstruct the old terms surrounding identity. These are terms that he feels are operating 'under erasure.' 'Under erasure' is viewed as, "the interval between reversal and emergence; an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all."[15] According to Hall, some of the terms that fit into this category are identity, ethnicity, and, to some extent citizenship. The term ethnicity is used in multiple forms depending on the subject area in which it is being addressed. Hall makes the case that, "ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated, and all knowledge is contextual."[16] Thus, the term ethnicity directly leads into the complexities of the term identity.

Identity is connected to the concept of identification, questions of agency, and politics. Hall views identity as strategic and positional, as:

> It accepts that identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation.[17]

This leads to identity formation through the creation of differences instead of similarities to others, because identities, "emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the

[15] Hall, Stuart. (1996b). "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" In Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications, p 2.
[16] Hall, Stuart. (1996a). "New Ethnicities." In David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (ed). *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* London: Routledge, p 443.
[17] Hall, Stuart. (1996b). "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" In Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications, p 4.

sign of an identical, naturally-constituted unity—an 'identity' in its traditional meaning."[18] Children's literature is a tool that allows for the negotiation of these differences through the use of imagination, as explained above.

Hall also addresses the issue of citizenship and who belongs, which is another issue that plural societies like South Africa have to face. Citizenship is directly linked to the concept of membership. Historically, membership has been a matter of right and entitlement but, according to Hall it is, "two-sided, reciprocal: rights in, but also responsibilities towards, the community. […] Rights can be mere paper claims unless they can be practically enacted and realized, through actual participation in community."[19] Additionally, citizenship is affected by diverse social and cultural identities since:

> The modern nation state is increasingly composed of groups with very different ethnic and cultural identities. Many of these groups belong to other histories, cultures and traditions very different from those of the indigenous people. These cultural differences are crucial to their sense of identity, identification and 'belongingness.' […] These differences present new challenges to, and produce new tensions within, what we called earlier the 'universalising' thrust in the idea of citizenship.[20]

The idea of belonging is critical to a person's identity. This allows a person to feel like they are not alone and part of an in-group. In the case of South Africa, diversity identity can be seen as much among the white population as the black population. In creating a unified sense of national identity within South Africa, one does not want to diminish cultural differences but instead create an over-arching national identity that embraces cultural differences. This is because they are what makes South Africa unique. Though, there are still multiple obstacles to creating an over-arching South African identity, which will be addressed below.



[18] Ibid, p 4.
[19] Hall, Stuart and Held, David. (1989). "Citizens and Citizenship" in Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques (eds). *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s.* London: Lawrence and Wishart, p 175.
[20] Ibid, p 187.

### 2.1c Benedict Anderson

Anderson focuses on what he refers to as 'imagined communities' and how they relate to the concepts of nationalism and the nation-state. According to Anderson, since the end of the World War II, every successful revolution has been defined in national terms. This is because, "nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time."[21] Yet, Anderson diverges from the historical and Marxist view of the term nationality. He looks at nationality, related terms of nation-ness, and nationalism, as forms of cultural artifacts. Anderson reasons that to, "understand them properly we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy."[22] This emotional legitimacy is directly linked to the concept of 'imagined communities.'

In order to understand the concept of 'imagined communities,' the term nation has to be redefined. Anderson redefines the term nation in the following anthropological view:

> [The] definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. […] It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. […] The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing a billion living human beings, has a finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations…It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. […] it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and

[21] Anderson, Benedict. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, p 12.
[22] Ibid, p 13-4.

> exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.[23]

This definition of imagined communities is the basis for all of Anderson's arguments concerning nationalism and the nation-state. Literature adds to the 'imagined community' by being able to bring all parts of a nation together so each individual feels like they know a little bit about each other, even though they may never meet in person. Examples of literature's ability to add to the 'imagined community' are further explored in chapter 3.

Lastly, Anderson looks at the nation as taking two different types of seriality, unbound and bound, stating that:

> "Unbound seriality, which has its origins in the print market, especially in newspapers, and in the representations of popular performance, is exemplified by such open-to-the-world plurals as nationalist, anarchists, bureaucrats, and workers."[24]

Children's literature fits within the unbound seriality category. This is because bound seriality, "has its origins in governmentality, especially in such institutions as the census and elections, is exemplified by finite series like Asian-Americans, *beurs*, and Tutsis."[25] In other words, unbound seriality does not differentiate the individual because it addresses a mass that cannot communicate with each other, even though they share a common praxis. Bound seriality differentiates between groups, but does not differentiate between individuals with each group. Both of the two categories rely on the use of language and print technology, this creates more possibilities for the 'imagined community,' and in return the image of the modern nation state. So, while literature helps to expand the sense of the 'imagined community' by creating easily accessible images of the national community. However, bound seriality can lead to problems of nationalism as seen by the government of the apartheid area.



[23] Ibid, p 15-6.
[24] Anderson, Benedict. (1998). *The Spectre of Comparisons:Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World.* London: Verso, p 29.
[25] Ibid, p 29.

## 2.2 South African National Identity

National identity has had multiple definitions over time. Many of these definitions have focused on images of the nation as a unit. They include traditions, culture, politics, history and even language, as discussed above. However, in the case of South Africa, which has a blending of different cultures and histories, we have to examine the recent past to form an overarching unified national identity. Historically, identity and national identity have been firmly connected to the concept of the nation state. Though, with today's increasing globalization, the nation state is becoming less of a natural entity. This is seen clearly in Africa with its unnatural borders created by colonialism. Additionally, the nation state has to contend with regional organizations and identities, as well as that of the United Nations' global identity. This has generated tensions against the effort to create an individual national identity. These tensions, and the increasingly globalized view, are producing a shift in examining national identity in terms of a social and cultural construct, over that of the nation state.

As Tim Edensor explains, national identity is directly connected to a nation's culture and particularly popular culture, instead of the previous focus limited to traditional cultural elements and the nation state. This is because:

> Traditional cultural forms and practices of the nation are supplemented, and increasingly replaced in their affective power, by meanings, images and activities drawn from popular culture. I do not want to suggest that the tradition-bound ceremonies and other cultural ingredients which most analysts of national identity have concentrated on are now irrelevant, but that their power is now largely sustained by their (re)distribution through popular culture, where they mingle with innumerable other iconic cultural elements which signify the nation in multiple and contested ways.[26]

This concept of national identity creation and analysis of national identity is particularly important to the case of South Africa because it allows for a more diverse concept of South African identity. Since children's literature that is being produced today reflects

[26] Edensor, Tim. (2002). *National Identity, Popular Cultural and Everyday Life.* Oxford, England: Berg, p 12.

the trends of the times of the society in which the books are written, it falls in the category of popular culture.

Two definitions that have been used in connection with South African national identity are by Abebe Zegeye and Ivor Chipkin. The first is by Zegeye, who explains individual identity in relation to the identity of the whole, saying that the, "concept of identity has become the primary medium for understanding the relationships between the personal (subjective) and the social, the individual and the group, the cultural and the political, and the group and the state."[27] The second definition, by Chipkin, focuses more on the group or community than on the individual. Chipkin defines, "An authentic national community is merely that group deemed to be the veritable bearer of the national mission—whatever it may be."[28] By combining the two definitions with Edensor's concept of national identity creation, I am be able create a new definition of national identity. This definition is one that places importance on the group as a whole, having a similar mission—whatever that may be, while not ignoring the role of the individual and their relationship to the community, as a whole and how old traditions are reinterpreted with other cultural elements. I use this definition to examine the role of each picture book in national identity creation.

There are two main ideological paths in the study of South Africa's national identity. One path focuses on race and racist patterns with exclusions of the past, while the other focuses more on multiculturalism and acknowledging the issue of race while trying to move past it. Within South Africa, multiculturalism as a term has had negative political implications in the past, with the apartheid regime using it to divide cultures instead of bringing about understanding and appreciation of the diversity in South Africa. Within this study, I use multiculturalism to mean the understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultures in South Africa, while acknowledging the impact of race, racist patterns and exclusions of the past.



[27] Zegeye, Abebe. (2008). "Media, youth, violence and identity in South Africa: A theoretical approach." In Hadland, Adrian; Louw, Eric; Sesanti, Simphiwe; Wasserman, Herman (eds). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media.* Cape Town: HSRC Press, p 18.

[28] Chipkin, Ivor. (2007). Do *South Africans Exist? Nationalism, Democracy and the Identity of 'the People'*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, p 10.

What has been taking place in South African society since the end of apartheid is a reconstruction of identity over that of the old apartheid regime. According to Hadland, Louw, Sesanti, and Wasserman:

> Since 1994 South Africa has experienced a significant transformation of its political and media landscapes. Not surprisingly, these transformations have impacted on both collective and individual identities of South Africans. On the one hand, those identities that had emerged and grown under apartheid were destabilized by post-1994 hegemonic shifts. On the other hand, the reconfiguration of the country's socio-political and media landscape create the conditions for—and promote—the emergence of new individual and collective identities. A complex process of identity construction, deconstruction and reconstruction has effectively charaterised post- apartheid South Africa.[29]

The process of identity reconstruction within the socio-political and media landscape has also produced a change within the field of children's literature.

The government of South Africa and the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party, have taken two different paths in the process of identity reconstruction. Gary Baines explains the two methods for nation-building and the repercussions with each method:

> The first might be termed 'rainbowism' and exponents emphasize that South Africa has a common, shared history. […] This vision stresses the need to forge a co-operative future from the cauldron of our conflict-ridden past.[30]

This discourse of nation-building was championed by Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu[31] when he was leading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. 'Rainbowism' has been represented in many post-1994 children's picture books, which can be seen in

[29] Hadland, Adrian; Louw, Eric; Sesanti, Simphiwe; Wasserman, Herman (eds). (2008). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media.* Cape Town: HSRC Press, p 9.
[30] Baines, Gary. "The Politics of Public History in Post-Aprtheid South Africa." Rhodes University, p 4.
[31] Desmond Tutu is an activist for peace and justice within South Africa. He fought for international sanctions against the apartheid government and won the Noble Peace Laureate in 1961 and was elected Bishop of Johannesburg within the same year. In 1986 Tutu became the Archbishop of Cape Town, the highest position of the Anglican Church within South Africa. After the end of apartheid Tutu led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Information from http://www.zar.co.za/tutu.htm. (12/01/2010).

chapter 4. The second discourse is 'Africanism' which was supported by Mbeki and is seen as a:

> version of the past is exclusive and triumphalist, and is epitomized by President Mbeki's "People's History" project which seeks to construct an official history which would make the liberation struggle that master narrative of our national history.[32]

The trouble with both discourses is that neither fully can create an overarching South African identity without fully confronting the past. In addition, 'Africanism' would alienate minority ethnicities, highlighting further the fragmentation of South African society. 'Rainbowism' on the other hand is a romanticizing the concept according to Kogila Moody and Heribert Adam, because it contradicts the realities facing South Africa, racially.

In the New South Africa, racial dilemmas still exists within the color spectrum. Policies have been created by the government to try and rectify some of these problems only to be faced with new setbacks. These policies have included Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and black professional and lobbyist organizations. However, such empowerment is not shared evenly throughout the nation. Racial divisions also remain prominent within South African elections and political parties. According to Moody and Adam:

> Voting behaviour follows by and large racial lines with only a small percentage of blacks voting for historically white parties (DP, NNP) and even fewer whites voting for traditional black parties (ANC, IFP). Although all political parties have racially mixed representatives in parliament and try mutually to court the constituencies of their opponents, their representatives of the 'other' are often considered deviants rather than authentic spokespersons of their communal constituencies. Supposedly colour-blind political debate on pragmatic issues is nonetheless quickly coloured: even legitimate criticism of blacks by whites is often rejected as racist and blacks often play the race card of

[32] Baines, Gary. "The Politics of Public History in Post-Aprtheid South Africa." Rhodes University, p 4.

> disadvantaged victims even against whites with impeccable credentials of involvement in the struggle against apartheid.[33]

With the issue of race still present both within the politics and the general community, shows that South Africa remains a distance away from de-racialization.

Until South Africa reaches de-racialization, the dream of a truly 'rainbow nation' will not come into existence. This involves both confronting the issues of the past and an end to, "the suspicion of divided loyalties and antagonistic identities [which] lurks under the surface of nonracial constitutionalism."[34] Once this has occurred, Mandela's 'rainbow nation' can be the, "co-existence of individual and collective identities, a representation of different cultures and of a shared South Africaness."[35] Though the creation of a truly shared South Africaness does not remove the economic divide that is steadily increasing. South African children's literature can help to develop a shared South Africaness by addressing the issues of the past and show possible way forward examples of which can be found within the six books that are analyzed.

The fragmented cultural nature of society within South Africa has it roots in the past. However, many people in South Africa have moved past a majority of race issues. As we have seen, race is still a source of contention within society but other issues such as class, ethnicity, gender, and to some extent religion have become more dominant, all of which children's literature can address. Zegeye states that even though issues of the past are still present, class and the economy have a growing role in identity formation, "South African society is, even after the change brought about by the demise of apartheid in the 1990s, characterized by the deep segmentation not only on the basis of culture, race, historical background, language and religion, but also in the grounds of economic status and class."[36]

However, Peter Alexander expresses a different view about the divide within South African identity. According to Alexander, "Firstly, racial identities may be waning,



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[33] Moody, Kogila and Adam, Heribert. (2000). "Race and Nation in Post-apartheid South Africa." *Current Sociology* July 2000 Vol. 48(3). London: Sage Publications, p 54.
[34] Ibid, p 55.
[35] Baines, Gary. (1998). "The rainbow nation? Identity and nation building in post-apartheid South Africa." *Mot Plurieles* No. 7. http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/MotsPluriels/MP798gb.html. (12/01/2010).
[36] Zegeye, Abebe. (2008). "Media, youth, violence and identity in South Africa: A theoretical approach." In Hadland, Adrian; Louw, Eric; Sesanti, Simphiwe; Wasserman, Herman (eds). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media.* Cape Town: HSRC Press, p 19.

but they are very far from being obsolete. Secondly, whilst linguistic and religious identities might provide spaces, within which people can understand the world, find friendship and secure material support, if politicized, they are likely to take a reactionary direction."[37] This reactionary direction was seen in the 2008 xenophobic attacks where language was used as a tool to distinguish between South Africans and non-South African Africans. By addressing these social divisions at an early age with the cognitive and affective behavioral methods addressed above, education on cultural diversity through children's literature can possibly prevent further reactionary action.

Many reasons have been given for the cause of the xenophobic attacks, however the main reasons for the attacks on non-South African African's are economic, which have generated what is called 'nativism.' 'Nativism' is, "Xenophobia towards illegal migrants is strongest among the street hawkers and squatters, not only because of competition for scarce survival space but for the rare opportunity to ostracize others. In this way, new identities of superiority are manufactured."[38] This need to create new identities of superiority can be directly connected to the widening class divide. Loren Landau explains the role 'nativism' has played, in relation to attacks of xenophobia, "Assumptions of non-nationals' inherent criminality and growing discourses of autochthony or nativism often serve to legitimise extra-legal xenophobic violence and discrimination by both state agents and others."[39] This legitimization was used by some to justify the violence and lack of response from government officials. This is clear example of what extreme forms of national identity can create in a culturally diverse society with a large immigrant population.

There are, however, positive elements of national identity within South Africa. These include the support of South African national sports teams, local regional teams, and the influence of Nelson Mandela. Regardless of race, gender, or age, the country pulls together to support the Springboks in rugby, the Proteas in cricket, and Bafana



[37] Alexander, Peter. (2006). "Globalisation and New Social Identities: A Jigsaw Puzzle From Johannesburg." In Alexander, Peter; Dawson, Marcelle C; and Ichharam, Meera (eds). *Globalisation & New Identities: A View from the Middle.* Johannesburg, SA: Jacana Media Ltd, p 47.
[38] Moody, Kogiala and Adam, Heribert. (2000). "Race and Nation in Post-apartheid South Africa." *Current Sociology* July 2000 Vol. 48(3). London: Sage Publications, p 64.
[39] Landau, Loren. (2005). "Urbanisation, Nativism, and the Rule of Law in South Africa's 'Forbidden' Cities." *Third World Quarterly*. Vol 26(7), p 1115.

Bafana in soccer. Sports have been a uniting component for South Africa and shows that there are elements of unified national identity within the country. This was seen when Mandela wore the Springbok jersey at the 1995 Rugby World Cup to everyone's applause, which is also depicted in multiple children's picture books. However, steps still need to be taken to increase diverse support of all national sport teams. According to Alexander, "Whilst rugby and cricket are still predominantly white, and soccer crowds are predominantly black African, passive support for South African teams is pervasive and multiracial (which was not the case before 1994)."[40] By teaching children about the different sports played in South Africa, children's picture books can build upon its unifying nature.

South Africa does contend with the challenge of creating a new South African identity while avoiding the negative affects of nationalism, as seen above. This ever important balancing act between national identity and nationalism is explained by Kurai Masenyama:

> Even though nationalism plays a crucial role in the genesis of a national identity, the latter is less directly political and more fluid. National identity involves a process of identifying oneself and others as a member of the nation, whilst nationalism is an ideology, which, in the Third World, was spread mainly through liberation struggles. The legacy of apartheid made the process of shaping an all-inclusive South African national identity even more challenging.[41]

The challenge is moving from the nationalism that was spread during the resistance to the apartheid regime to a national identity that includes everyone of all ethnicities within South African society.

One way to help create this shift to a unified national identity or shared South Africaness would be based in shared histories and memories. The sporting world has provided shared histories as seen above with the 1995 rugby world cup and will again



[40] Alexander, Peter. (2006). "Globalisation and New Social Identities: A Jigsaw Puzzle From Johannesburg." In Alexander, Peter; Dawson, Marcelle C; and Ichharam, Meera (eds). *Globalisation & New Identities: A View from the Middle.* Johannesburg, SA: Jacana Media Ltd, p 41.
[41] Masenyama, Kurai. (2006). "South African Broadcasting Corporation and Dilemmas of National Identity." In Alexander, Peter; Dawson, Marcelle C; and Ichharam, Meera (eds). *Globalisation & New Identities: A View from the Middle.* Johannesburg: Jacana Media Ltd, p 162-3.

with the 2010 soccer World Cup. However, two events outside of the sporting arena that have played a major role in the creation of new shared memories are the 1994 elections and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Almost every one of voting age and races came out to vote in 1994 for the first time and created a shared history in the process of building a new democracy. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided a means for confession and forgiveness within a society trying to heal, thereby creating another shared history. Nevertheless, more shared experiences need to be developed to help heal the ruptures within South African society. Furthermore, these forms of shared histories are easily translated into children's pictures as will be seen in chapter 4.

The problem with the development of any national identity in today's world is the impact of global influences. The impact of these influences cannot be forgotten within South Africa, with the importation of television shows, books, magazines, fashion, and music. As Masenyama states, "The project of nation-building and national identity creation in South Africa during the late 1990s and 2000s has been undertaken in the wider context of internationalization. This refers to the growing influence of globalization, a process that has resulted in a more rapid and expansive movement of goods, services, peoples and cultures across national boarders."[42] Thus, in any study of identity development within today's contexts one has to keep in mind the impact of globalization. The impact of globalization is most highly felt be the youth of South Africa, as western media outlets have greater ability to shape their sense of identity. This is not to say that media outlets have the ability to define a person's identity however, they can influence elements identity formation. These influences can come from the choice of television show a child watches to the books a child reads.

Within the nation, South African youth have gained greater importance in the formation of a new identity. This has to do with the reality that 50 percent of the population is under the age of 24. The next generation has the advantage of limited if any personal exposure to the former apartheid regime. This creates a case where the identities that the youth of South Africa form today will shape the identity of the country as a whole for the future, making popular culture even more relevant to national identity formation. The importance of the youth is further explained by Zegeye:

[42] Ibid, p 157.

> The conclusion is inevitably that it is the youth that are the vanguard of change; they will have to 'unlearn' the stereotypes of violent masculine aggression and submissive, feminine passivity. It is they who have the responsibility to shape a more equitable society.[43]

Children's picture books can assist to start the break down of old stereotypes, in order to generate positive new images. I will further explain how children's literature dismantles old stereotypes and develop new images of identity in chapter 3.



[43] Zegeye, Abebe. (2008). "Media, youth, violence and identity in South Africa: A theoretical approach." In Hadland, Adrian; Louw, Eric; Sesanti, Simphiwe; Wasserman, Herman (eds). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media.* Cape Town: HSRC Press, p 43.

## Chapter 3: Children's Literature and National Identity

There are multiple debates in the children's literature community about the incorporation of national identity within children's literature texts. I have divided these debates into three main categories: international, African, and South African children's literature. Each category is then broken into individual debates that are significant to each topic area. Many of the debates in the international field of children's literature are relevant to both the African and South African fields of children's literature; however both children's literature in Africa and South Africa have unique challenges and insights within their individual areas.

In international children's literature and national identity there are four main areas of debates: ideology and textuality, multiculturalism, shifts away from overt nationalism and stereotypes, and international publishing. Two of the central people leading the debates are Margaret Meek of the Institute of Education at the University of London, and John Stephens, Associate Professor of English at Macquarie University. Both Stephens and Meek encapsulate the current debates within the field on the international level. Focusing on the three major areas of debate within Africa are Raoul Granqvist, professor of language studies and English at Umeå University, Sam Mbure Kenyan children's author and poet, and Véronique Tadjo, author and head of French studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. The three debates that are addressed are colonial legacy, need for local multiculturalism, and the affects of external and internal pressures. In South African children's literature there are four major areas of debate: historical past; shift in old stereotypes of race and class; reality, hope and the rainbow nation; and issues in publishing. The leading researchers and commentators on South African children's literature are Barbara Lehman, Judith Inggs, Thomas van der Walt, Beverly Naidoo, Yulisa Amadu Maddy, and Donnarae MacCann.



### 3.1 International Children's Literature and National Identity: Main Debates

The four main debates in the field of children's literature on the international stage are led by John Stephens and Margaret Meek. The main reason for focusing predominantly

on the works of Stephens and Meek is because of their ability to encompass all the major debates within the field of national identity and children's literature. However, it is important to note that both Stephens and Meek are speaking from a European viewpoint and have focused most of their studies on Western children's literature. Stephens' main point about national identity revolves around the use of ideology and textuality. Stephens developed his theory of the use of ideology and textuality from Peter Hollindale's 1988 paper that focused on the use of ideology within the field of children's literature. According to Stephens, he uses three aspects of ideology that were originally identified from Hollindale, which I will discuss later. Meek however, looks at national identity from multiple viewpoints— the writing of text to the process of publishing. She has focused on the developmental aspects of children through the use of children's literature. Not only does she examine the more dominant area of juvenile literature, but also the role of children's picture books.



### 3.1a Ideology and Textuality

National identity and its development within children's literature are encoded within the ideology of the text and use of textuality through syntax and lexical structures. The argument for this form of encoding of national identity within ideology and textuality is made primarily by Stephens and Hollindale. In the case of ideology and children's literature, ideology represents the collective beliefs, views and attitudes of the society in which the book is being written. The main reason why ideology is seen as an important characteristic in the development of national identity is ideology's ability to represent society in a form that is made comprehensible to children through the medium of children's literature. This is achieved through syntax teaching a child how to form a grammatically correct sentence; and lexical structures teaching a child society norms or codes. Over time, children's literature has gained an important place in society because of this socializing ability:

> Children's fiction belongs firmly within the domain of cultural practices which exist for the purpose of socializing their target audience. Childhood is seen as the crucial formative period in the life of human beings, the time

> for basic education about the nature of the world, how to live in it, how to relate to other people, what to believe, what and how to think—in general, the intention is to render the world intelligible. Such ideas as these are neither essential nor absolute in their constitution but are constructed within social practices, and the intelligibility which a society offers its children is a network of ideological positions, many of which are neither articulated nor recognized as being essentially ideological.[44]

With the critical role that children's literature plays, Stephen emphasizes that you cannot have text without ideology and this ideology is shaped by the society in which author is situated.

In order to deifier the ideology of text, children need to learn how to interpret three main aspects of Hollinsdale's theory of ideology: one the use of ideology as 'an overt or explicit element within the text', two the use of 'passive ideology' overlapping with the concept of the implied reader and three that ideology is 'inherited with the use of language.' By understanding these three aspects of ideology in a text it helps the child to understand the meaning behind a text and also helps the child to learn the correct way to interact within society's norms. This is primarily because it will help teach the child the proper use of language in the society they live in and what is considered to be social norms. This is important, "If a child is to take part in society and act purposively within its structures, he or she will have to master the various signifying codes used by society to order itself."[45] These signifying codes make-up what is considered to be social norms or what is acceptable in a given society. The use of children's literature is a mode in which to enable the child a window into the social communication of a society or culture.

The first of the ideologies is overt encoding within the text that frequently reveals the author's political, social, or moral beliefs. These beliefs are not universally held within the society as a whole in most cases. However, the representation of minority views is important to understand the dynamic behind a nation's identity. It helps to break-up some of the restrictiveness of the dominant children's text by creating a different point

[44] Stephens, John. (1992). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction.* London: Longman, p 8.
[45] Ibid, p 8.

of view for the reader. In addition, it adds to the availability of increased subject positions. According to Stephens:

> The subject positions available to children as users of books are often restricted and restrictive, and this is nowhere so sharply defined as by the tendency for these positions to express the ideological assumptions of a society's dominant cultural groups. A function of many books, and sometimes their primary function, is an attempt to change those assumptions.[46]

The act of changing or breaking up of assumptions within the dominant social or cultural group is one way for children's literature to generate a shift in national identity away from the old segregating identity of the past.

There are however problems with the use of overt ideology within children's text. Some of these problems can actually cause a backlash against the very views or ideas the author is trying to advocate. Hollindale suggests, "that there are problems of representation for writers here, in that explicit advocacy tends to provoke reader resistance to the message, and at the same time it concedes that the advocated value or behaviour is still a minority social practice, whereas the ideal behaviour can be in effect muted if presented as though it were normal practice."[47] In addition, he goes on to state that by making the message less overt requires more of the reader to be able to interpret the text. However, in the case of children's picture books there could be an argument for more overt ideology until the child-reader gains the tools to interpret more subtle forms of ideology.

The second of the ideologies that can shape the development of a sense of national identity within children's literature is the use of 'passive ideology.' Passive ideology looks at the writer's 'unexamined ideological assumptions.' These unexamined ideological assumptions are created by the ideals that are generally taken for granted in the society of the author. The ideals that are embedded within a text require a higher level of interpretational skills by the reader, but according to Stephens, "are probably

[46] Ibid, p 50.
[47] Ibid, p 9.

more powerful in effect."[48] The problem with the study of 'passive ideology' is that it has been overlooked because it overlaps with the concept of the implied reader. The implied reader, "concept is widely used in the discussions of children's fiction, generally in the form of a hypothetical reader derived from a text's own structures."[49] This implied or hypothetical reader within the text will fill in the gaps of the text with their own internalized ideology which relies on patterns and points of view found the text. This allows for the text to gain greater meaning and for the child-reader to learn how to better interpret the world within the book, which can be translated to the world in which the child actually lives.

The last of the ideologies that help to shape the way that national identity is portrayed in children's literature is ideology, 'inherited with the use of language.' Which Stephens views this, "inherency of ideology in language works to suppress articulations of conflict and to restrict signification to the attitudes and interest of dominant social groups."[50] This form of encoding ideology requires the most analytical tools to interpret the text. Many younger children will be unable to fully comprehend the meaning behind the text because they will not have been exposed to the inherited qualities within the text. Examples of these inherited qualities can be the use of another storyline, such as that from a well known fairy tale, or something that is historical within the past of a society. This does however, provides a platform for child-adult interaction to explain the inherited qualities within the text, building understanding. This form of ideology does allow for elements of past to be translated into the present similar to what Edensor described in chapter 2.

The combination of the uses of ideology forms what Stephens refers to as textuality, along with other elements within children's literature. Textuality is a topic that is discussed by many within the literature community as a whole and it is no different within the subject area of children's literature. Textuality is an all encompassing subject area from the discoursal modes of a text to various points of view within a text, and the ideology of the text. This includes intertextuality, which is defined as, "how readers make meaning and the realization of the complex relationships that exist between the readers,

[48] Ibid, p 10.
[49] Ibid, p 10.
[50] Ibid, p 10.

the text, other texts, other genres, and the cultural context of any 'reading'."[51] Simply put, intertextuality is a collection of references and even quotes from other text. Intertextuality of a text helps to shape the way in which the reader must interpret the text. According to Stephens, there are two forms of reading textuality and one must be able to employ both forms of reading in order to fully comprehend a text. These are top-down or macro-discoursal perspective and bottom-up or micro- discoursal perspective.

These two forms of reading vary in difficulty level and can create an issue where children of different ages or reading levels will interpret the text differently. This is because of what each interpretative model requires. Either 'top-down' or 'bottom-up,' "Top-down reading draws on higher order knowledge to help make a text more intelligible and so has recourse to world knowledge and prior knowledge of content areas, of genres, of narrative codes, and of conventions which make discourse coherent, such as conversational principles."[52] This is more easily applied by older children to interpret the text and translate this ability of interpretation into their everyday lives. Where as, "Bottom-up reading begins with words in small stretches of language, that is with lexis, semantics and syntax, and works upwards from there to meaning."[53] This version of interpretation is easier for younger children to understand the basic meaning of a text.

By understanding these two forms of interpretation, the author is better able to incorporate elements of positive national identity within children's literature. This is mainly because of the function of intertextuality within children's literature, "Intertextual function is not restricted to the relationships between *texts* defined in the narrow sense, but also operates in the larger sense of a cultural discourse, especially with reference to the relationships between language, signs and culture."[54] Thus, intertextuality creates a learning ground for children to interpret the world around them, both from within their own society and from other cultures, in addition to the text of the book. This is why intertextuality and ideology form a critical part in studying the incorporation of elements of positive national identity within children's literature.



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[51] Benton, Michael. (2005). "Reader, Texts, Contexts: Reader-response criticism." In Peter Hunt (ed). *Understanding Children's Literature*. *Second Edition.* London and New York: Routledge, p 97.
[52] Stephens, John. (1992). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction.* London: Longman, p 29.
[53] Ibid, p 29.
[54] Ibid, p 116.

### 3.1b 'Us' versus 'Them' and Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is taught in varying forms in children's literature, discussed both within Meek's work in the sections written by Carol Fox who focuses on 'us' versus 'them,' Gillian Lathey who focuses on 'border crossing,' and Anna Adamik Jászó, in addition to the work of Stephens. As a method of teaching through differences, 'us' versus 'them' is an easy way to show distinctive cultural groups. However it can take either a stereotypically negative or positive form depending on how it is used. On the other hand, teaching multiculturalism, as defined in chapter 2, within society helps to create positive forms of national identity through understanding and appreciation. In the subject area of multiculturalism is what Meek and Lathey refer to as 'border crossing,' when an author and/or illustrator is from or lives in a society outside of the one in which they are writing or the translation of a book from one culture to another. The two different methods for teaching children about other cultures, including the child's own culture have the ability to be used both separately and in conjunction. I am first going to address each of these methods on their own before looking at how they can be combined to teach a positive sense of national identity.

The characteristic of using the 'us' versus 'them' method, as Fox refers to it, in children's literature is seen most commonly in wartime children's literature and pieces of historical children's literature. English children's literature relating to the time of the Second World War shows a perfect example of how this has been used to create, in a negative manner, the 'us' versus 'them' by stereotyping the German people. The same can be said for other European children's literature dealing with this time period. This principally has to do with the myth/folktale aspect of writing about the time period. Although this method can also be used in a positive manner, if stereotyping is reduced, it is an intricate undertaking because of simplistic nature of the folktale. This is because, "Recounting battles as folk-tale is part of the myth making that settles around accounts of war in all cultures. But these authors employ the forms of myth/folk-tale to speak against populist ideas of events rather than to contribute to flag-waving, saber-rattling and the

depiction of whole peoples as either victims or bullies."[55] If more authors follow those that are writing about historical events, especially those dealing with war in a manner that reduces the depictions of whole groups as either good or bad, then there would be a decline of 'us' verse 'them' stereotyping. This also requires the author to treat characters more individually than as a group. This method still, however, allows for the simplistic nature of showing children a contrast between their culture and the cultures of others. After all, national identity is established through generalizations about other cultures and what makes those societies different from the child's own society. In the case of South Africa, stories surrounding the liberation struggle can fall into this category if the writer is not careful about depictions of racial and ethnic groups as either good or bad.

Another factor to the 'us' versus 'them' aspect of historical children's fiction is the role of the writer's attitudes towards the subject. Historical events provoke different feelings in different people that are shaped both positively and negatively by the society around them. Jászó states:

> It is a complicated business to analyse historical fiction from one point of view, and, at the same time, to do justice to the 'otherness', not only of people and events, but also to the opinion one side held of the other. We need to know what stance the writer takes on events reported as 'facts', and how the writer's viewpoint is influenced by personal experience and the views of other writers.[56]

This form of analysis is difficult for younger children to make and to understand, creating a situation where the information in the book can be taken as fact. This does, nevertheless, show the child the attitudes of a given society about the historical events. However, as Jászó explains, without understanding the other side of the events, it can lead to a negative version of the 'us' versus 'them' form of teaching children about the ideals of the society around them.

Opposite on the spectrum of teaching children about their own culture through the interaction with others is that of multiculturalism. In today's world with increasing

[55] Fox, Carol. (2001). "Conflicting Fictions: national identity in English children's literature about war." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 46.
[56] Jászó, Anna Adamik. (2001). "Friend or Foe? Images of the Germans in Hungarian literature for young readers." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity.* UK: Trentham Books, p 34.

movement of people through faster, safer methods of travel the world is becoming increasingly multicultural. Thus, we need to teach our children how to live in a globalizing world. Children's literature can help to reduce elements of xenophobia within a country by teaching multicultural understanding. This is because according to Fox:

> National identity does not have to be inherently monocultural. If a social group saw its common identity as *tolerant*, *egalitarian,* and *pluralist,* for example, it might have *cultural diversity* as its defining feature, which would be the very opposite of Gellner's definition of extreme nationalism, where *similarity* of culture is insisted upon as the prime condition for group membership.[57]

Teaching multicultural understanding or cultural diversity can take different forms. One form is what Meek refers to as 'border crossing' and other is Stephen's use of subjectivity. Both forms of teaching can help to develop a national identity that is not 'inherently monocultural.'

One approach to teaching children about their own culture and cultures around them is through the use 'border crossing' which draws attention to immigrant communities from different around the world. This helps children to understand the growing multi-ethnic nature of their society. 'Border crossing' takes the form of books written from the perspective of an immigrant to the society or books that have been translated from one culture or language to another. Lathey explains:

> This is what makes these writers so different: they write against the grain of 'national' expectations from inside or outside their country of residence, and are able to combine elements of two cultures and their meeting points into an artistic whole. The following consideration of authors whose work springs from a sense of cultural duality reveals just what children might gain from these linguistic and imaginative acts of translation.[58]

[57] Fox, Carol. (2001). "Conflicting Fictions: national identity in English children's literature about war." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 44.
[58] Lathey, Gillian. (2001). "The road from Damascus: children's authors and the crossing of national boundaries." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 4.

Books containing this form of cultural multiplicity are becoming increasingly more important in a world that is progressively more globalized. National identity and its representation in children's literature also reflect world trends just as world trends are reflected in society. An example of 'border crossing' in South African children's picture books is explored in chapter 4.

The use of subjectivity, which is the representation of different viewpoints or perspectives, can help lead to greater understanding of others within society and can be applied in portraying a multicultural society. Presenting different viewpoints within the same text permits the reader greater insight into different roles society has to offer allowing the reader a safe place to negotiate their own identity and role within society. This allows for identity to also focus on minority groups within society. Stephens suggests that subjectivity can be used to promote a positive self image of children within society's minority groups, while increasing personal development of all children within the society. Picture books are, in some cases, better able to portray social differences than just narration according to Stephens, "The task can be carried out unobtrusively in picture books, because the dual mode can be exploited by simply representing cultural variety in illustrations without addressing it in the text."[59] In addition, subjectivity can be used to break down social class, race, and gender issues by displaying multiple viewpoints from within a society to children. This form of subjectivity contained in illustrations is a critical element in national identity formation in South African children's picture books.

The combination of using the 'us' versus 'them' method and both forms of multiculturalism, "border crossing' and subjectivity can increase a child's understanding of their own culture and the ones around them. A culturally diverse national identity and understanding is becoming increasingly more the norm for western children's literature. The different methods allow for the ability to be used in combination with each other in addition to on their own. However, what Fox refers to as 'us' versus 'them' does risk increasing xenophobic tendencies that have been seen in South Africa, towards those who are outside of what is considered the norm by the majority of society.



[59] Stephens, John. (1992). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction.* London: Longman, p 53.

### 3.1c Shifting Away From Overt Nationalism and Stereotypes

The children's literature industry started to see a shift in the way that other cultures were portrayed at the end of the Second World War. This shift was to be completed fully by most countries at end of the Cold War. Children's literature in many ways mimics adult literature trends and the trends in the world that it is being written. As the world shrank away from the concept of overt nationalism, the creation of the open belief that one national identity is superior to another, because of the negative effects that it had had on the world stage the children's literature community did so as well. The same can be said about stereotyping other cultural or minority groups. As literature moves away from the overt nationalism and stereotypes of the past, it moves towards a continental sense of identity and world sense of belonging. This occurs also in the oral form of story telling, "The universality of this oral art form, and its susceptibility to variation and invention, underwrite the hope that children's literature can be a means of promoting a 'common' culture."[60] In addition, Europe's colonial past has also played a role in this shift away from old stereotypes and overt nationalism.

British children's literature was impacted by the effect of the end of colonialism by the way that the British people and the people of her former colonies were portrayed. This is because, "Overt nationalism has become not just unfashionable but unfeasible because of the inescapable consciousness of the legacy of British colonialism."[61] Some feel, however, that removing elements of national identity from children's literature because it is no longer seen as fashionable creates a lack of national identity within a nation. Many nations feel an identity crisis due in part to decreased uniting elements of identity and increased migration. This is especially true of countries that have experienced increased levels of migration after the end of colonialism, in addition to the increase in importation of children's books mainly from the United Kingdom and the United States, which I will discuss later.

Even with some European countries trying to retain their sense of individual identity the move away from stereotyping others seems to have become the norm. The

[60] Meek, Margaret. (2001). *Children's Literature and National Identity.* UK: Trentham Books, p 59.
[61] Styles, Morag. (2001). "Voices of the World: National Identity in British Poetry for Children." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 67.

reduction in stereotyping is particularly important in countries and regions that are culturally diverse. As Graham explains:

> It is in children's picture books where we see a possibility of a national identity emerging which is not predicated on division but on friendship and integration. The books tend to reflect the less complicated view of each other that children have, compared with their parents, so to this extent they are realistic whilst also being idealistic, in the long tradition of children's books.[62]

This simplistic view can be used to teach a child about their own culture while at the same time integrating other cultures into their society. This can help reduce the development of xenophobia within societies and across borders. In South Africa's case, children benefit from not having the complex views regarding race of their parents who experienced the apartheid system. The reduction of the use of overt nationalism and stereotyping can only help to lead towards the development of positive nationalism versus the nationalism that has led to violent conflicts.

The lessening of overt stereotypes and nationalism has helped to allow a broader sense of one's own identity to develop. Cotton discusses the ability to build a sense of what it means to be European while at the same time keeping in mind a country's own identity:

> A sense of Europeaness is a much more achievable goal than a quest for European identity. It implies that as Europeans we need to feel for ourselves what it is like to be European; to believe in our own national identities yet acknowledge the similarities and celebrate the cultural variances that exist between us.[63]

This same concept can be applied to nations that have been made out of former colonies. These nations, unlike those of Europe, were never developed from one ethnic group with a similar culture. Instead, they have multiple ethnic groups that do not all share cultural similarities. By following the lines of Cotton's sense of Europeaness it may help these

[62] Graham, Judith. (2001). "The Same or Different: Children's books show us the way." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 106.
[63] Cotton, Penni. (2001). "The Europeaness of Picture Books." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 119.

countries to develop a sense of unified national identity. This allows cultures to retain their own unique identities while also belonging to the larger national identity. Instead of seeking a singular South African identity, seek a sense of South Africaness, which over time could become an overarching South African identity.

It remains however, that children's literature is shaped by the author and the author's views, "The ways in which children's books reflect the nation's tenets and aspirations for itself are inevitably linked to the extent to which writers and illustrators feel part of and imbued with the sense of their country."[64] Whether the author feels a strong sense of national pride or not, that will be reflected within their writing. Thus, many children's books vary with the amount of elements of national identity that creep in the text and/or pictures. The trend, nevertheless, remains to avoid the overt tactics of the nationalism of the past and to move forward to celebrate the similarities and variances between cultures.

### 3.1d the Role of International Publishing Companies

The influence of international publishing has affected what types of children's books are able to be published within the industry. English children's literature from the publishing houses in the United Kingdom and the United States of America has dominated the world of children's literature in the past. Many believe that this is because of the strong history of English children's literature that has provided the unbalanced nature amongst the children's literature community. This unbalanced nature creates what Bell refers to as a 'ghetto.' Bell explains:

> The usual reason given for the disproportion, both now and in the past, between children's books translated into and out of English is the existence of the very flourishing tradition of English children's literature. It's a good point, but not really a justification for ignoring the best of the foreign equivalents. And even with that tradition of acknowledged and continuing excellence behind it, children's literature in the United

[64] Graham, Judith. (2001). "The Same or Different: Children's books show us the way." In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 106.

> Kingdom is in something of a ghetto. Literary ghettos do exist: in the English-speaking world children's books are in one and translations in general is in another, so it is hardly surprising that translations of children's literature are consigned to the ghetto twice over.[65]

However, children's books which are published in English need to be able to reach a multi-national English audience, and must be able to be comprehended in the UK, as well as Australia, the USA, Canada, South Africa, and other English speaking markets.

In addition to the dominance of English children's literature is the fact that the publishing companies focus more on the amount of profit which they can make than the content of the books that they create. This can be seen in the lack of multi-language books, such as those published in English and in a native language of the country of publication, or even as a teaching tool for foreign languages. Another aspect that becomes neglected by publishing companies for profit is the incorporation of 'intercultural and minority culture books:'

> The objectives of such programmes can be defined relatively easily, but the actual implementation faces continuing difficulties, especially since publishers of children's literature favor mass-market books and tend to regard both intercultural and minority culture books as unprofitable and are consequently reluctant either to print them or to maintain them in print […] Further, although cultural assumptions are largely inseparable not just from the discourse in which they are expressed but also from language itself, dual language books, which can offer young readers an empowering kind of textual subjectivity, remain relatively rare. Because they are expensive to produce and the market is small, there is no likelihood that many will ever appear on a publisher's general list.[66]

As Stephen's points out publishing companies are more focused on the mass-market books that will increase the publisher's profits. This causes increased problems in creating the books needed in South Africa and the continent as a whole.



[65] Bell, Anthea. (2001). "Children's Literature and International Identity? A Translator's Viewpoint?" In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 24.
[66] Stephens, John. (1992). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction.* London: Longman, p 51.

The 'ghetto' that Bell refers to as having been created within the English children's literature community, with publishers only willing to work with books that will make a profit, as Stephen's discusses, has greatly affected children's literature internationally. This was seen at the Institut für Jugendbuchforschung of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt, in a 1996 seminar:

> to discuss the state of German-language children's literature internationally […] From all that was said, one concluded that publishers and authors in the German-speaking countries had just about given up on the English language market for children's books, while conversely so many titles are translated into German that publishers' list scrupulously distinguish between those translated 'from the English', 'from the American', 'from the Australian', and so forth.[67]

The reflection of what is happening within the German children's literature community can be seen in other nations as a demonstration of how publishing companies control what will be published where.

This divide or gap that has been created by the publishing community has changed the shape of national identity within children's literature. This is mainly because of the dominance of English (British and American) children's book being translated and/or published into other countries children's literature markets. With this dominance, the native market, in some cases, are unable to compete financially to produce their own children's literature. If a country can compete with the dominance of British and American publishing, that generally means their books have to be written in English. This would mean they will lack many of the elements of national identity, which make that nation unique, in order to create a mass-market book that can be published for all English speaking nations. This creates a problem for smaller publishing houses to survive in a market that is controlled by publishers in Britain and the United States.



[67] Bell, Anthea. (2001). "Children's Literature and International Identity? A Translator's Viewpoint?" In Margaret Meek (ed). *Children's Literature and National Identity*. UK: Trentham Books, p 27.

### 3.2 African Children's Literature and National Identity: Main Debates

Africa as a continent faces some unique debates in children's literature and national identity that are not faced by the majority of the children's literature community. These unique debates are created because of Africa's historical past of the slave trade and colonialism, amongst other historical events. The African literature community still does, however, face similar problems as those that are faced by the literature community as a whole concerning the subject of national identity. These similarities are mainly between the non-English speaking western countries and African countries since they both face the dominance of British and American publishing houses. There are three main debates currently shaping the children's literature community in Africa, which are also relevant to South Africa. Unfortunately, there is very little information that has been published in English on the former French colonies and the development of children's literature, with the exception of Véronique Tadjo. Thus, most of the information pertains to former English colonies.

These main issues are discussed within the compilation *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa* edited by Raoul Granqvist and Jürgen Martini, and Véronique Tadjo's article from *Sankofa:* "The Challenges of Publishing for Children in French-Speaking Africa: The Example of Côte d'Ivoire." The two main authors within Granqvist and Martini's compilation that look at the aspects of national identity or problems of creating a uniquely African identity are Raoul Granqvist and Sam Mbure who focus on the former English colonies. Véronique Tadjo, however, discusses the problems faced by many of the former French colonies of Africa and the troubles that they have faced since independence.

Granqvist and Martini outline many of the challenges that face children's literature production within their introduction, which children's literature has to overcome:

> [T]heir over-emphasis on oral, conventional tales and school-book traditions, their sexist gender preferences, their linguistic and cultural inadequacies (favoring 'major' national cultures and languages), their

> colonial and neo-colonial bias as to both production and content, their poor artistic quality, their 'secondary' role in canon-formation[.][68]

By understanding these problems that African literature has to overcome, along with the issue of publishing that literature faces, one can understand why western children's literature remains dominant within African markets.

### 3.2a the Colonial Legacy

The colonial past of the African continent has shaped not only its people but its literature including children's literature. This past has created several obstacles in the children's literature community that stand in the way of creating children's literature that contains positive components of national identity. One of the main problems of the colonial legacy is the remaining dominance of colonial literature. Mbure addresses this when he examines the negative influences of this colonial literature:

> In the first place this colonial literature took away the African identity in a child. Apart from the colour of his skin, everything else was westernized. He/she acquired other names such as Peter or Mary or David or Jane. He/she admired Tarzan, Robin Hood, etc. and wanted to behave like them. He/she wanted to be every hero he came across in the English classics. Secondly, the colonizers killed indigenous oral literature and traditions. They discarded them as primitive.[69]

Colonial literature has shaped many of the images that are created about Africa and for Africa in a negative way. This returns to what Hall referred to as the 'essential black subject.'

Mbure also addresses the language issue that has been left behind from the colonial rulers. Mbure takes up Ngugi wa Thiong'o African language argument within the larger literature community and extends it to the children's literature community.

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[68] Granqvist, Raoul and Martini, Jürgen. (1997). *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa.* Matatu 17-18. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p xii.

[69] Mbure, Sam. (1997). "African Children's Literature or Literature for African Children?" in Granqvist, Raoul and Martini, Jürgen (eds). *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa.* Matatu 17-18. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p 6-7.

However, Mbure does not go as far as saying that all children's books should be written in native languages. Instead he calls for increasing the number of books published in native languages and a shift from English literature to African literature in English. Mbure distinguishes between the two by referring to English literature as 'children's literature in English by foreigners.' This would create an increase in books published in English that would also provide subjectivity in which the child-reader can relate to, rather then the foreign points of view found in the colonial canons of literature.

The issue of language and the division between colonial and native literature has created a split within the continent. This rupture is mainly between those who feel that native literature is not literature because it comes from the oral tradition of folk or cautionary tales and lacks the components that originate within the English canon of children's literature. With the reliance on the English canon in much of England's former colonies there has also been a westernization of African children's literature, causing a loss of African identity. The predicament that has been left behind from the former colonial legacy has had a continuing impact on the development of the children's literature community in the African continent.

On another side of the colonial legacy spectrum is literacy and the creation of a book industry. Tadjo states that:

> [O]n the African continent, it is more accurate to say that it [literacy] is the product of European colonialism, although in most cases mass literacy only came in the 1960s, the period of African independences. This suggests that it is only in the post-independence era that the basis for a viable book industry was established in most African countries.[70]

Thus, until independence, African countries were unable to create a local book industry due to the dominance of the colonial power. Nevertheless, colonialism's development of literacy, even if selective, created the gap after independence for the establishment of a book industry. However, as in the case of South Africa, a viable book industry was present before independence yet literacy was selective until independence, which I will explain later.

[70] Tadjo, Véronique. (2005). "The Challenges of Publishing for Children in French-Speaking Africa: The Example of Côte d'Ivoire." *Sankofa.* Vol 4, p 18.

### 3.2b the Need for Local Multiculturalism

Local multiculturalism calls for the merging of the traditional with the modern by combining elements of the oral tradition with the trends and needs of the present. This is reflective of the realities that face children in Africa and the development of their own forms of identity. According to Granqvist and Martini, "The oral tale is being urbanized and globalized, but there are signs that the local tale is not being submerged by commercial soaps, that it can appropriate them and make them obey its own system of rules."[71] This allows for traditional oral tales to retain their moral integrity, however, there is a failure to incorporate the local tale into the urbanizing process that would be needed to further develop local multiculturalism in African children's literature. Granqvist and Martini believe that the urbanization and globalization of the oral tale is important for the development of children's literature and national identity. This is because it allows for the translation of the traditional oral tale into a written format that can reach a greater audience, in a shorter amount of time, in a way that the underlying morals of the tale can still be understood. If the individual local tales were to be incorporated in this same process it would allow for greater understanding and appreciation of the different cultures inside a nation, creating the building blocks for a national identity that values cultural diversity. In addition, they feel that, "Children have no problems merging the old and the new, the traditional and the modern, the roles of man and women."[72] This is important when tales are being both urbanized and globalized at the same time.

By combining the old and the new, it also allows for a renegotiation of previous stereotypes. Furthermore, combining the oral tradition or heritage allows authors to reduce the gap in local cultural heritage literature and the use of local languages that has been created. Granqvist outlines the main obstacles in order to reach a reduction in not only stereotypes, but the dominance of one local culture over another that is shaping the children's literature community:



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[71] Granqvist, Raoul and Martini, Jürgen. (1997). *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa.* Matatu 17-18. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p xiii.
[72] Ibid, p xiii.

> The politically strongest culture normally claims the priority to define what is contained by the cultural boundaries. Confronted with a Kikuyu collection of proverbs, the Luo people would find themselves dismissed. The locus for what constitutes national culture lies with those who are in power; in many countries, then, one children's literature, literally speaking, may suppress another; its landscapes pictures, city stories, animal tales, and language are prevented from being heard or seen. In a number of African nations there is an on-going tug-of-war between different, competing, nation-defining authorities where the educational systems, and thus also the children's literatures, play decisive roles.[73]

The challenges that Granqvist outlines between different ethnic groups within Kenya can be seen in most African nations due to the colonial legacy that is addressed above. This control of what can be included in children's literature culturally can play a larger role in a nation's development. Children's literature can help shape the way that a child views themselves through cognitive and affective behavior that is represented in the text. If a child only sees the presence of one ethnic group it can do one of three things: feel proud of the stories because they apart of the dominate ethnic group being represented, feel ashamed or an outcast because they do not adhere to the norms of the dominate ethnic group, or become resentful towards the dominant ethnic group creating further ethnic divides in a nation. In addition, the suppression that is seen in children's literature is generally also suppression on a larger scale that can cause social and/or political unrest.



### 3.2c Affects of External and Internal Pressures

External pressures come from many areas but the three main pressures are Western multinational publishers, development aid organizations, and economic pressures. Each of these pressures creates a distinctive challenge for the publishing industry in Africa. Because of these challenges, the publishing industry is forced to make hard choices regarding the development of children's literature on the continent. In many cases they

[73] Granqvist, Raoul. (1997). "Who is Building the House?" in Granqvist, Raoul and Martini, Jürgen (eds). *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa.* Matatu 17-18. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p 32.

have been forced to place the development of children's literature last to focus on the development of much needed textbooks.

The problem of external pressures must always be taken into account when examining children's literature in Africa. This allows for a complete picture of the obstacles which publishers and authors must overcome to create a single children's book. According to Granqvist:

> To do justice to the literary scene confronting the African child a number of otherwise well-known circumstances have to be taken into account: the western multinational publishing companies, and development aid organizations monopolizing the African book market at all levels, the economic realities requiring most African governments to favor educational material—thus promoting a highly didactic children's literature—and the ambivalence informing the attitudes to print culture which—paradoxically—has had the positive effect of lifting both material and narratology from oral traditions.[74]

In addition to the problems listed above by Granqvist is that of social and political unrest which can slow or limit the production of local books if not stopping publishing for the duration of unrest. This means that children's literature in Africa, including South Africa has to overcome the multinational publishing companies that have the capacity to mass produce books for markets around the world, and the influence of aid-giving organizations on the content of books, along with economic realities of Africa, and the affects of social and political unrest. Additionally, African nations are also faced with the challenge of publishing companies that are still operated and owned by the former colonial powers creating further obstacles.

Tadjo gives a clear example with the case of Côte d'Ivoire and the challenges that are facing the publishing industry in Africa, even in the development of textbooks. As Tadjo states:

> French publishing companies remained strongly established and controlled the lucrative textbook industry. Moreover, because the legislation

[74] Granqvist, Raoul. (1997). "Who is Building the House?" in Granqvist, Raoul and Martini, Jürgen (eds). *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa.* Matatu 17-18. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p 23-4.

> affecting the book industry was often inadequate, with tariff and taxation rates exceedingly high, it was very difficult for local publishers to compete with the large foreign multinational companies and the heavily subsidized state publishing houses that were set up by the governments.[75]

With French publishers still controlling what is seen as the most lucrative section of production with textbook industry, it does not allow for a nation to even create textbooks that include the distinctive elements of a nation's national identity. Additionally, the tariffs and taxation rates create an increasingly difficult situation for publishing companies to overcome within the economic restrains of the region. Moreover, according to Tadjo there is the problem of book distribution, "books in Côte d'Ivoire, as in the rest of French- speaking region, remains difficult because of the high cost of transportation as well as taxes on printed materials."[76] All of which publishers must overcome. In case of South Africa, instead of being faced with the control of the former British colonial power, the publishing industry is faced with the problems left behind by the former apartheid regime, discussed further below.

### 3.3 South African Children's Literature and National Identity: Main Debates

South Africa has a unique past both politically and linguistically that has shaped the development of children's literature. Politically, the country came out of British colonialism only to develop into an oligarchy with the apartheid regime. The process of what the apartheid government referred to as separate development left an economic and developmental divide between the races and classes within the country greater than in most other developing nations. Additionally, South Africa had a negotiated process to fully democratic rule unlike many other nations that had to resort to violent revolutionary action. Linguistically, Afrikaans has been a dominant language within the children's publishing industry, as it is distinctive to South Africa, they could not import Afrikaans children's literature from outside the country. Since the change to fully democratic rule

[75] Tadjo, Véronique. (2005). "The Challenges of Publishing for Children in French-Speaking Africa: The Example of Côte d'Ivoire." *Sankofa.* Vol 4, p 18.
[76] Ibid, p 21.

the country has had to contend with trying to develop children's literature for all eleven national languages; creating a uniquely South African problem.

The end of apartheid brought about large political and social changes within the country, which has also affected the children's literature community. According to Judith Inggs this transformation created a process of 'change and renewal:'

> Change and renewal in South African society has meant a reconstruction of the child in children's fiction. In reality, as well as in fiction, the South African child—and especially the young person—is challenged with redefining his or her identity in relation to a new environment. This new environment is both physical and cultural—who is the child in relation to the surroundings, and who is the child in relation to others?[77]

According to Inggs children's literature is one tool that can be used in aiding the redefining of individual and South African identities in connection with the changing environment of South Africa. The authors below explore these issues of 'change and renewal' within South Africa's national identity as reflected in children's literature more deeply.

Several authors explore national identity in children's literature post-1994; however, they focus mainly on young adult children's literature and not on picture books. Although, many of the debates within young adult children's literature can also be applied to South African children's literature, adjustments do have to be made for age and maturity of the reader. There are four main debates within the field of South African children's literature that reflect issues that are unique to South Africa. Furthermore, because of South Africa's place on the international stage, it also shares aspects of the debates presented in both Africa and international children's literature sections, as a whole.



[77] Inggs, Judith. (2004). "Space and Race in Contemporary South African English Youth Literature." In van der Walt, Thomas (ed). *Change and Renewal in Children's Literature.* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, p 25.

### 3.3a the Historical Past

Like most other countries in Africa, South Africa has a past of war and colonialism. However, the apartheid government sets South Africa apart from most other countries on the continent, with the possible exception of Zimbabwe and Ian Smith's former government. The children's literature community in South Africa has had to deal with the impacts of colonialism, the apartheid government, and the domination of Afrikaans. The historical past has shaped the development of children's literature in the country, with children's literature being a reflection of the political and social situations of each time period.

The impact of colonialism has played a major role in the development of South Africa as a nation, which is also reflected in its children's literature. Colonialism affected the development of language and the depiction of the native population within children's literature. There have been different views put forward to reduce the problems surrounding the language issue. One view is J.K Chick's to avoid conflicts brought about by multilingualism would be to promote monolingualism within the country. However:

> "for reasons of political expediency, the 'solution' decided upon in South Africa was not monolingualism but limited bilingualism. Thus the 1910 constitution for the union between the former British colonies and the Boer republics designated the two ex-colonial languages, English and Dutch, as the sole official languages, and made no mention of indigenous African languages."[78]

This was to shape the impact of Afrikaans later in history and the problems currently with native language literature.

In addition to the language issue left behind by colonialism is the sense of ownership or lack of ownership by the indigenous population which created what is referred to as 'cultural anonymity.' Maddy and MacCann explain the problem with the attempted development of 'cultural anonymity:'

[78] Chick, J. Keith. (2002). "Constructing a Multicultural National Identity: South African Classrooms as Sites of Struggle between Competing Discourses." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* Vol. 23, No. 6, p 464.

> This applause for cultural anonymity undercuts the quality that gives South Africa its national uniqueness. To erase the distinct sources of mythological beliefs is to deprive the myths themselves of their right of origin: it denies specific peoples their right of ownership. This lumping together follows the usual pattern of overgeneralization in discussions of Africa.[79]

The pattern of overgeneralization that has been left behind by the colonial era has been carried over through not only by the apartheid regime, but to literature that is currently being produced. This is mainly due to the fact that unlike other countries that have a substantial native population, there has been no discussion of ownership of traditional tales. This is also connected to the concepts of unbound seriality where the population of the country is not depicted as individuals, or even multiple different groups, but as a single mass. The colonial legacy in South Africa however, has been over shadowed by the impact of the apartheid regime.

The impact of the apartheid regime extended beyond political and social policies into the area of children's literature. This was accomplished in examples of social interactions that agreed with apartheid regulations which, in return, influenced education and English literature. This shift started after the Second World War when the Afrikaaners' Nationalist Party first came into power. According to van der Walt, the Afrikaans writers created a new South African literature movement, whose influence went deeper than just Afrikaans literature. Involving both education and children's literature:

> [T]he values of living in the countryside were propagated until the 1970's; even Afrikaans fiction for adults is characterised by the term *locale realisme* (local realism) until the 1960s. This influenced children's books in English, and the authors of the few South African books published in English for children also turned to rural South Africa for their setting—a country life of hunting and farming—, despite the fact that most English

[79] Maddy, Yulisa Amadu; MacCann, Donnarae. (1996). *African Images in Juvenile Literature: Commentaries on Neocolonialist fiction.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland, p 107.

> speakers in the country were urbanised. The impact of this 'back to the farm' yearning is clearly seen in Afrikaans children's books.[80]

This form of writing carried through to and past the end of the apartheid regime. The farm was an easy platform for authors to showcase social interactions amongst races since it was the most common place that races would interact in reality. In the urban parts of society, racial interactions were limited to that of the domestic help. Additionally, the farm setting allowed for an idyllic view of different racial groups, since few white authors were willing to venture into depicting the realistic lives amongst all races.

Another effect of both legacies discussed above is the impact of Afrikaans as the dominant language in the South African children's publishing industry. This is principally due to the fact that Afrikaans, as a language, is unique to South Africa and thus other countries do not produce books for the Afrikaans market. According to Lehman, the promotion of Afrikaans is related to the rise in nationalism with the apartheid regime:

> With the rise of nationalism and the attendant promotion of Afrikaans, children's book publishing in that language flourished, since there was no other place in the world that could supply such literature. By the late 1980s, there were nearly three times as many books published each year for children in Afrikaans as in English. Literature for black South African Children who spoke other languages had a rich and varied oral tradition but little in the way of written stories about contemporary life.[81]

However, a strong argument can be made that because Afrikaans is unique to South Africa, it was only natural for it to have a strong presence in the children's literature industry. This dominance may have hindered the development of children's literature in other languages within South Africa. There have, however, been grassroots movements in South Africa for the publishing of native language text and dual language text.



[80] Carpenter, Carole; Hillel, Margot; van der Walt, Thomas. (2005). "The Same But Different: The Dynamics of Local and Global in Australian, Canadian, and South African Children's Literature." In O'Sullivan, Emer; Reynolds, Kimberly; Romøren (eds). *Children's Literature Global and Local: Social and Aesthetic Perspectives*. Oslo: Novus Press, p 177.
[81] Lehman, Barbara. (2006). "Children's Literature and National Identity in the New South Africa." *Sankofa* vol 5, p 7.

### 3.3b Shift in Stereotyping of Race and Class

The end of apartheid and the transition to fully democratic rule created a shift in children's literature to more natural social interactions moving away from old stereotypes. However, the remnants of apartheid have still left behind some of the old stereotypes and class divides. Inggs describes what typical interactions were between different races prior to the 1990s transition in children's literature:

> Very few works prior to the 1990s were able to realistically depict children of different races moving in the same space. If writers wished to portray contact between different races, they tended to set their stories in rural areas, or on farms, where contact was more usual.[82]

A change from the rural interactions between races to the more urban was a difficult shift, but a necessary one that brought about other changes in the children's literature industry. Shifts away from the rural setting start to occur with books like Niki Daly's *Zanzibar Road* and Dianne Case's *92 Queen's Street* which popularity led to other children's books following similar paths.

Nevertheless, natural social interaction and the connection to the environment have played a major function in the development of South Africa's children's literature post-1994. Inggs once again describes the environment's importance and connection with the development of identity:

> [T]he physical space in which the characters find themselves is fundamental to their image of self in relation to the environment and to others. The physical space in which they move is symbolic both of a common heritage and of the division still existing in society. Very often, but not exclusively so, the natural landscape is used to symbolize a shared identity and a sense of belonging, whereas the urban environment represents alienation, division, and deprivation of ownership.[83]

[82] Inggs, Judith. (2004). "Space and Race in Contemporary South African English Youth Literature." In van der Walt, Thomas (ed). *Change and Renewal in Children's Literature.* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, p 25.
[83] Ibid, p 32.

The use of the environment to symbolize a meaning of belonging is mostly found in juvenile literature that is aimed at the teenage-reader. However, picture books use the environment symbolically as well in illustrations. A child-reader is more likely to connect to an environment that is not alien to that of their own. Even though the country is not where a child maybe from it is also seen as less alien than an urban environment that is opposite of the one in which the child resides. The environment is also used as a reflection of social class with the poor being depicted more in the rural landscape then the urban.

The impact of the economic and social class divide goes beyond the pages of the picture book into access to children's literature. There is a growing middle class within South Africa allowing greater access to children's books for children who previously would not have had access to such books. However, there is still a large lower class that cannot afford the luxuries of children's literature. According to Lehman:

> [T]he reality is that economic advancement is aided by knowledge of English. Books are relatively expensive and even viewed as luxury in South Africa, hence access is restricted often to readers who can afford them. The so-called culture of reading (and writing) can sometimes seem to be limited to a particular (small) class with the resources (and time) to be included. This affects who writes children's books, who the audience for those books is, and therefore, what is written about and in what language.[84]

Without access to children's literature by means of owning or borrowing from a library there is a reduction in the tools available to not only promote literacy, but a change in South African national identity. Class has and will continue to play a major role in the development of children's literature in South Africa because of its luxury status.

Nevertheless, van der Walt states that a shift is occurring with children's literature even with the affects of class addressed above. Authors want to become more politically and socially correct and show all aspects of the country. Thus, "a similar tendency could formerly be observed amongst South African authors anxious to be politically correct

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Lehman, Barbara. (2006). "Children's Literature and National Identity in the New South Africa." *Sankofa* vol 5. Pg. 11.

(and often producing embarrassingly unnatural stories in the process), they now dare to address the duality of society—the other side of the colour divide."[85] This shift in depicting more than the middle and upper classes is important to the development of South Africa's new national identity into what has been called the 'rainbow nation.' By allowing children to understand how others live in South Africa it opens a window into a world that they may not otherwise understand. This is important to help create culturally diverse understanding, that has the possibly to led to a strong sense of what it means to be a part of South Africa.

### 3.3c Reality, Hope and the Rainbow Nation

Since the transition to fully democratic rule, another shift in children's literature has occurred, to one that tries to depict the realities facing South Africa's youth. Using children's literature to depict many of the problems facing South Africa's youth allows for the negotiation of issues of identity within a safe environment. However, the negotiation process of more complex sensitive issues mainly occurs in juvenile literature and not at the picture book level. As Lehman states, "Many of the novels for older children and teenagers deal with typical adolescent concerns of romantic problems and family and school life. However, more serious issues such as the challenges of interracial friendships; rape, HIV/AIDS, or both; and other violence have been liberally represented in the books published in this decade."[86] The decade after the transition to majority rule has brought about more than just images of reality, but images of hope.

Images of hope in children's literature started to develop within South African children's literature toward the end of the 1980s. The images of hope help to encourage the new generation of South African youth to reach for their full potential:

> This hope is portrayed in South African children's books today—not because the writers ignore the fact that the hopes of generations of black



[85] Carpenter, Carole; Hillel, Margot; van der Walt, Thomas. (2005). "The Same But Different: The Dynamics of Local and Global in Australian, Canadian, and South African Children's Literature." In O'Sullivan, Emer; Reynolds, Kimberly; Romøren. *Children's Literature Global and Local: Social and Aesthetic Perspectives*. Oslo: Novus Press. Pg. 181.
[86] Lehman, Barbara. (2006). "Children's Literature and National Identity in the New South Africa." *Sankofa* vol 5, p 11.

> children were destroyed, but because they believe that children deserve to be exposed to a positive outlook on life and to characters who rise above their circumstances. […] Recent works portray what South Africans are seeing around them today: the interaction among races celebrating diversity and human experience.[87]

The combination of images of hope with the inclusion of images of the reality facing South Africa's youth help to negotiate the process to what is being called 'the rainbow nation.' These images are depicted in both the book *Dreamwalking* by Bettina Schouw and in *The Peace Star* by Isabella Holden and Kathy Pienaar in two very different ways, which will be explained in chapter 4. However, there is still a need for greater multicultural understanding of both the different ethnic groups in South Africa and those from outside.

### 3.3d Issues of Publishing

South Africa endures many of the same publishing issues as the rest of Africa and non-English speaking countries. Although English is becoming the key publishing language of South Africa, the topics in which children's literature discusses are specific to South Africa and thus do not translate well in other counties markets. Additionally, South Africa has had to focus resources on the development of textbooks like much of the African continent and faces the impact of outside books from the UK and America.

South Africa is not a homogeneous society and has to address the issues left behind by the separation of the races during the apartheid era. Many people from outside of South Africa are unable to understand the social upheaval that has occurred since 1994. Most people remember the South Africa of the 1980s that appeared on their television screens, with inhumane practices of violence to retain the white minority rule. The conflicts that have occurred in developing a new South African identity are difficult for many to understand due to South Africa's violent past and the fact that it is not a

[87] Carpenter, Carole; Hillel, Margot; van der Walt, Thomas. (2005). "The Same But Different: The Dynamics of Local and Global in Australian, Canadian, and South African Children's Literature." In O'Sullivan, Emer; Reynolds, Kimberly; Romøren (eds). *Children's Literature Global and Local: Social and Aesthetic Perspectives*. Oslo: Novus Press, p 190.

homogenous society. According to van der Walt, "This means that some books do not travel well. The desire to confess and make reparation for what colonialism and separate development did to the indigenous people, for instance, a pressing local issue, does not seem to exercise non-South Africans to the same extent."[88] With the problems of exporting books, many South African children's authors have turned to subject areas that avoid confrontation with such issues. However, to establish a sense of South Africaness these issues of the past have to be addressed to move forward as a united South Africa.

The domination of the publishing industry in South Africa by outside publishers can be clearly seen in the *Annual Book Publishing Industry Survey Report 2007* with trade in fiction and non-fiction being 76.45 percent for imported books and only 14.91 percent for local books according to the survey.[89] This is in contrast to the educational section of the study which shows only 14.65 percent of educational school books are imported and 66.61 percent of educational school books are local. This does not include the five other academic and educational sections of books, in which local books still outnumber imported books. The study shows that South Africa, like much of Africa, has had a strong focus on educational school books, such as textbooks, and less focus on what is seen as leisure books or fiction. The international publishing industry is also hard to compete in the trade of fiction and non-fiction due to their ability to mass produce, as discussed above. Thus the sale of imported books in South African book stores is R163,782,009.00 more then local books, including children's literature that is not produced for schools.

The combination of problems with exporting books and the domination of the international publishing industry creates some of the additional obstacles for South African children's literature. However, domestically South Africa has been addressing the issue of publishing children's books in mother tongue languages for small children. This is seen in, "The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) has created the multilingual Little Hands series of miniature picture books for

[88] Carpenter, Carole; Hillel, Margot; van der Walt, Thomas. (2005). "The Same But Different: The Dynamics of Local and Global in Australian, Canadian, and South African Children's Literature." In O'Sullivan, Emer; Reynolds, Kimberly; Romøren (eds). *Children's Literature Global and Local: Social and Aesthetic Perspectives*. Oslo: Novus Press, p 189.
[89] Figures from *Annual Book Publishing Industry Survey Report 2007.* Francis Galloway, Rudi MR Venter, and Willem Struik, Publishing Studies, University of Pretoria, p 19-20.

very young children and has translated (in collaboration with Tafelberg publishers) the superb *Madiba Magic: Nelson Mandela's Favourite Stories for Children* (edited by Marguerite Gordon) collection into the 2004 Nguni language edition."[90] Even so, there is only a small limited product of books in mother tongue languages and grassroots movements cannot fill the gaps on there. The increase in production of mother tongue books within South Africa, not only fills a gap in the industry, but is a way for the publishing industry to expand the readership of children's literature and help with the creation of national identity through the child's negotiation of such books.

### 3.4 Elements and Books that are Analyzed and How

There are many complex issues surrounding the subject of children's literature and national identity, as seen above. For this study, I will be focusing more on specific elements of national identity within in six different children's picture books. The six elements of national identity that I will be focusing on are derived from the debates discussed above. The six picture books that I selected were chosen for the different elements of national identity and genres that they represented within picture books. All of the books also had to be readily available for children to read, found either in a bookstore or a library, written for children between the ages of 4 and 10, and published in South Africa after 1994. These picture books include elements of shared history, important South African figures, native South African plant and animal life, traditional South African stories, multiculturalism and hope for the future. Additionally, all books with the exception of one were written by South Africans. The books that will be examined are *The Day Gogo Went to Vote* by Elinor Batezat, *Dreamwalking* by Bettina Schouw and Adam Carnegie, *What a Gentleman* by Dianne Case, *Fynbos Fairies* by Antjie Krog, *The Dancer* by Nola Turkington and Niki Daly, and *The Peace Star* by Isabella Holden and Kathy Pienaar. All books are in English since I am unable to read the other South African national languages.

The process of examination will be in three main parts. First, I will be looking at the ideology and discourse of the book. During this initial read I will evaluate the

[90] Lehman, Barbara. (2006). "Children's Literature and National Identity in the New South Africa." *Sankofa* vol 5, p 15-6.

information that the story is providing the reader and if it creates a stereotypical view of a certain race, ethnicity or tries to portray current realities. Are the images in the book mainly positive or negative, are they slanted towards one stereotype that we see in today's society? Additionally, in this read of the book I will be analyzing the overall impression of the text in combination with the illustrations.

Second, I will re-read the book with a focus on writer control looking at subjectivity, use of language, and intertextuality. This will involve looking at the writer's use of registers within the book: does the author use language that would only be heard from one social class/area or does the author over use different registers for each character reflecting social class/area differences? From whose perspective is the story being told and what impact that has on meaning? From the picture perspective, I will be examining the relationship amongst the objects in the pictures and the pictures connection to the text. With concern to intertextuality, I will be looking at what other text or information are encoded within the text and illustrations. This will help to understand the ability for each book to be translated into other children's book markets.

Third, I will combine the information from both the first and second analysis to determine what aspects of national identity are presented to the reader. In this step, I will look at the divide between the images of national identity are present within the initial read and the second read. This should help to create further understanding of the multiple interpretations that can be created within each book. I will also take into consideration the problems listed in chapter one, in concern with the development of South African national identity on South African children's literature and its possible impact on each book. With the combination of these three steps I hope to gain a deeper understanding of the possible impact children's picture books may have on creating elements of unified national identity.

## Chapter 4: Analysis of Selected Picture Books

I will examine each of the six picture books in this section focusing on form and content. First, each book is examined based on its typology and modality. The typology of the picture book is based of off the relationship between the text and the illustrations. Modality explains the means in which symbols of national identity are presented to the child. This helps to decide which tools of interpretation need to be applied by the reader. To analyze the content of each book as concerned with national identity, I have created six elements of national identity. These are important South African figures, South African plants and animals, shared histories, traditional South African folktales, multiculturalism, and hope for the future. These categories or elements are able to be applied in conjunction with the debates and issues from chapters two and three, to form a view of national identity representation within each picture book.

### 4.1 Categories of Picture Books

Children's picture books are divided into different categories of typology. For this study, I have combined both Torben Gregersen's and Joanne Golden's categories of typology. This is because Gregersen uses four different general categories, whereas, Golden elaborates on the interaction between text and picture. By combining the two, I am able to create an all-encompassing typology that provides categories to specifically match the picture books that are discussed below. The first category is the picture book or story picture storybook by Gregersen in which the text and the pictures are equally important to the story. This is the category that most of the picture books that I have examined fit. However, this category is too generic to create a real understanding of the text-illustration relationship, which is where Golden's typology comes into play. The first of Golden's typology that applies in this study is where, "the text and pictures are symmetrical."[91] This means that the text and the pictures are telling the same story creating redundancy. *The Peace Star, Dreamwalking,* and *The Day Gogo Went to Vote* all fall within this category. The second typology which applies is where, "the text carries primary

[91] Ibid, p 7.

narrative, illustration is selective."[92] *The Dancer* is the only book of analysis that fits in this category. The last of Golden's categories that applies to this study is where, "the illustration carries primary narrative, the text is selective."[93] *What a Gentleman* is the only book of analysis that fits in this category. Lastly, returning to Gregersen, is the category of the illustrated book where, "the text can exist independently."[94] This is the category that *Fynbos Fairies* falls into. The type of typology that each book fits within helps to determine the age of the intended reader. Younger children are more likely to understand books that the text and the pictures are equally important or where the picture tells more of the story. Older children, on the other hand, are generally able to interpret books where the text carries the primary narrative and the pictures are selective.

In addition to typology, picture books have different modalities. The six picture books that I have examined fit in three different modalities. The form of modality that the picture book takes informs the reader of what method of interpretation is needed to understand both the text and the pictures. The main form of modality is symmetrical indicative; this means that both the text and the illustrations are represented as true. Three of the six books analyzed fit in this category. They are *The Peace Star, The Day Gogo Went to Vote,* and *What a Gentleman*. The second category is where there are two parallel modalities. This occurs when either the text or the pictures are represented as realistic and the other as fantasy. *Dreamwalking* fits within this category because the text is a realistic story about a young boy achieving his dreams, whereas the pictures transfer the reader into a dream world. The last category is ambiguous modality which is sub-divided into different categories of its own. *Fynbos Fairies* falls into the sub-category of alternating ambiguity because both the text and the pictures transfer the reader from realistic to fantasy and back again. *The Dancer* fits in the sub-category of embedded ambiguity; this is because of the dream narrative (dancing with the rainbull) is accomplished by a female main character instead of the traditional male character. By understanding both the typology of the picture book and its modality, we are better able to interpret the overall meaning of the book. However, to understand the role that national identity can play in

[92] Ibid, p 7.
[93] Ibid, p 7.
[94] Ibid, p 6.

children's picture books typology and modality have to be combined with ideology, subjectivity, and intertextuality.

### 4.2 Elements of National Identity

The six books that I will examine in this study fall into, what I have found to be, six different categories of how national identity can be depicted in children's picture books, with most books fitting into more then one category. These categories are: important South African figures, South African plants and animals, shared histories, traditional South African folktales, multiculturalism, and hope for the future. These are represented in the uses of both words and images, which is one of the reasons why picture books can play in important role in national identity development of children. In analyzing each book, I will discuss the six categories and how each book uses them in order to form a positive sense of national identity. Additionally, I will be connecting each book's created image of national identity to Zegeye, Chipkin, and Edensor's definitions of national identity.

Many of the elements of national identity that are examined are straightforward in meaning however; the content of each category can cause points of contention due to South Africa's divided past. These categories included important South African figures, South African plants and animals, traditional South African folktales, and shared histories. South African plants and animals is the only category in which the contents can generally be agreed upon. In connection with the category of shared histories, I will be looking at only the positive shared histories with reduced racial contention. Multiculturalism has been a point of controversy in South Africa, as explained earlier. For this study, I am using the term multiculturalism to mean tolerance, appreciation and understanding toward other cultures both within and outside of South Africa. I do not intend multiculturalism to mean or represent the removal of multiple cultures into one culture that excludes ethnic minority groups within South Africa. The last category, hope for the future, represents images or words that provide a positive motivational message to the child reader. This is important to help create a positive outlook on the future of South Africa.

### 4.3 *Dreamwalking* by Bettina Schouw with Pictures by Adam Carnegie

*Dreamwalking* is like many children's books with a plot line where the main character has a dream, works towards that dream, and then achieves their dream. However, what sets this book apart is that the main character is Mark Shuttleworth[95], the first South African to go into space. The book follows Shuttleworth on his journey from a young boy dreaming of going into space to an adult in space. Along the way to reaching his dream, he encounters people who tell him that it is too big or impossible to achieve. Shuttleworth never lets people deter him from reaching his goal. In the end, because of his hard work, Shuttleworth achieves his goal in front of all of the South African people. The story informs children that all dreams are important, no matter how big or small they may be and the importance of having a dream. Dreams become a metaphor for hope throughout *Dreamwalking*. South Africa and Africa also retain dominance within the book through its illustrations and use of language.

The illustrations throughout *Dreamwalking* keep both South Africa and Africa at the center through its use of images and intertextuality. Africa is depicted by the African continent being the main image when the world is portrayed, instead to the typical image of Europe or North America. South Africa is brought to the forefront by showing the landscapes of Cape Town, South Africa, as seen in figure 2 below, and a Springbok rugby player (South Africa's national rugby team). The book even utilizes little details of intertextuality, like the South African flag on Shuttleworth's space suit. Furthermore, in the illustrations it shows the multicultural diversity of South Africa in its colorful and vibrant depictions of both Shuttleworth's journey and the importance of dreaming. Though the author uses English as the book's primary language, local phrases are added from Xhosa, and the book even has a doormat in one of the illustrations saying welcome



[95] Born in Welkom, South Africa and rised in Cape Town. Mark studied at the University of Cape Town majoring in finance and information systems. He is the founded Thawte an internet consulting business in 1995 that was later bought by VeriSign in 1999. Having a strong belief in South African entrepreneurs he start a venture capital team, HBD. Which lead to the Shuttleworth Foundation Fund that supports social innovation in education continent. This venture led to his realization of going to space in April 2002, becoming the frist South African in space. Shuttleworth is still active within the technology field around the world, we the creation of organizations like the Ubuntu project. Information from http://www.markshuttleworth.com/biography. (12/01/2010).

in Afrikaans. All of these elements help to develop understanding of others, which is an important component in the category of multiculturalism in national identity development. The rhyming nature of the writing gives the book an easy flow that is accompanied by the image of a dream-like girl. The dream like girl, seen in the image below, is created in an image similar to the author Case. The girl appears to be the friendly likeable narrator of the story.


[96] Figure 1

*Dreamwalking* fits into three of the main national identity categories listed above, important South African figures, hope for the future, and multiculturalism. The important South African figure that is represented in the books is the main character Mark Shuttleworth. However, the identity of the little boy is not revealed until the end of the story. This allows for children to develop a sense of connection with the main character since it reduces the element of the character's fame and increases the feeling of sameness. It is important for a child to be able to make a connection to the character because the child will take on the same view point of the character or subjectivity. This allows the author greater control of the way in which the story is interpreted and what the child learns both cognitively and affectively. Moreover, *Dreamwalking* shows children that not just 'other' children, especially those from outside of Africa, can achieve great things, by showing how an everyday South African was able to reach amazing heights. Shuttleworth is not the only important South African figure to be shown in *Dreamwalking*. The book

[96] Illustration by Adam Carnegie (2008). *Dreamwalking*. Pietermaritzberg: Songololo.

also has images of Nelson Mandela, Miriam Makeba[97], and Oscar Pistorius[98] and how they too are 'inspirational dreamers' that can be found in South Africa. These dreamers are described in the book by Schouw:

> Then there are those whose lights have a shine, so special, so rare, so resplendently fine, that all who stand in the fire of that light, Have dreams that miraculously do ignite.[99]

The important South African figures in the book are used as inspiration to the youth of tomorrow, which brings about the category of hope as one of the main storylines within *Dreamwalking*.

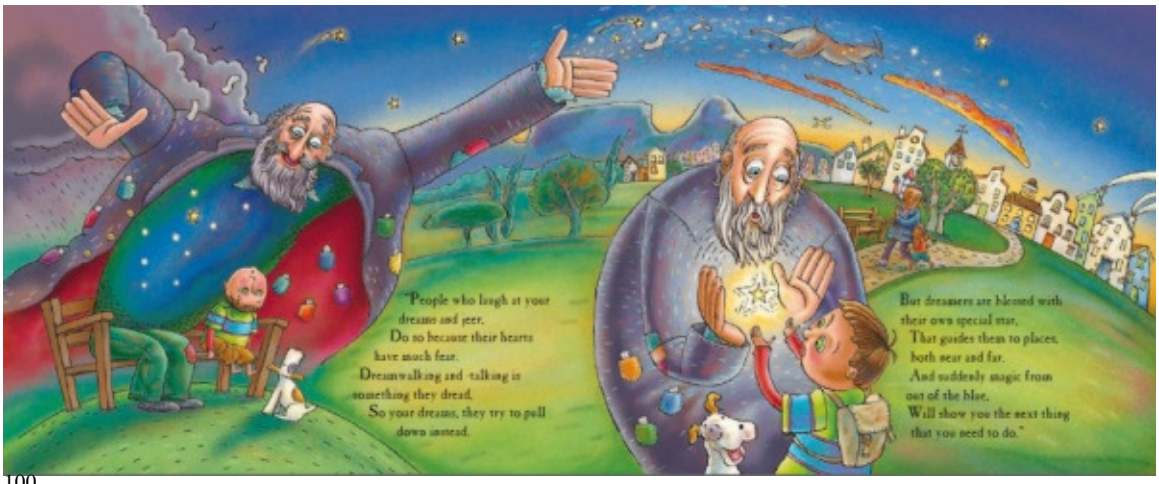
Hope for the future plays a major part within the book with dreams representing hope and change for the future. The book encourages children to dream both big and small and to try and reach their dreams, no matter what everyone else tells them. A stranger within the book appears larger then life. The stranger, as seen below, has the appearance of a homeless man or a part of the night as if his is not really there but is the keeper of dreams. He gives young Shuttleworth words of wisdom that transcends all social classes.



[97] Born in Johannesburg, who became the first South African to win a Grammy award for the album 'An Evening with Harry Belafonte & Miriam Makeba'. Makeba became a humanitarian who spoke out against the evils of apartheid which led to her living in exile in 1960. While in exile she lived in both the United States and Guinea where she was asked to be a delegate to the UN to speak about the affects of apartheid. Information from http://www.zar.co.za/makeba.htm. (12/01/2010).

[98] Pistorius is the double amputee world record holder in the 100, 200 and 400 metres events and runs with the aid of carbon fibre transtibial artificial limbs. In 2007 Pistorius took part in his first international able-bodied competitions. Oscar took part in the 2004 Summer Paralympics in Athens and came third overall in the T44 (one leg amputated below the knee) 100-metre event. [Despite falling in the preliminary round for the 200 metres, he qualified for the final. He went on to win the final with a world record time of 21.97 seconds, beating single amputee American runners Marlon Shirley and Brian Frasure. Information from http://www.oscarpistorius.co.za/show.asp?id=517 (12/01/2010).

[99] Schouw, Bettina. (2008). *Dreamwalking*. Pietermaritzberg: Songololo.




[100] Figure 10

These words of wisdom about trying for your goals are:

> People who laugh at your dreams and jeer, do so because their hearts have much fear. Dreamwalking and –talking is something they dread, so your dreams, they try to put down instead. But Dreamers are blessed with their own special star, that guides them to places, both near and far. And suddenly magic from out of the blue, will show you the next thing that you need to do.[101]

This quote not only gives hope to children in their pursuit to achieve their dreams, but also about why some people may put them down. It lets children know that they should never let a bully discourage them because in most cases that bully is actually jealous, a lesson it takes some adults years to learn. If children follow Schouw's 'ten useful tips for dreamers,' which is found at the end of the book, not only would we see a more positive youth but a more driven youth that would be less likely to commit crimes, as long as the necessary tools are made available.

The combination of the three categories that are briefly discussed above come together to help the development of a positive unified sense of national identity. This is accomplished by not only teaching them about a South Africans that have accomplished something amazing, but giving children a South African that they are able to look-up to. Giving children native heroes is important to their sense of national pride. In the case of Shuttleworth, it shows children that not only Americans and Russians can become

[100] Illustration by Adam Carnegie (2008). *Dreamwalking*. Pietermaritzberg: Songololo.
[101] Ibid.

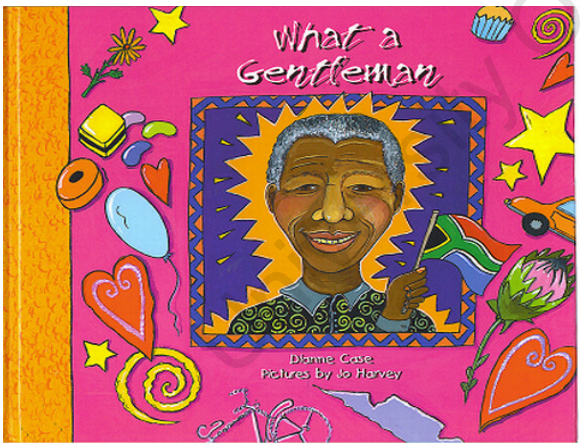
astronauts, but South Africans like them too. This brings about the sense of hope for the future which is important to the development of a positive unified sense of national identity, which is also intertwined with the multiculturalism portrayed in the illustrations. Being without hope and diverse cultural understanding in a multicultural society that has experienced hopelessness within the past can lead to the development of a divided society with high levels of violence. However, a text that helps to give back hope to the next generation and an understanding of others can be used as a tool for the development of a positive unified sense of national identity, which is important for healing. Additionally, the book is written in a register that is easily understood by children; since there is no obvious regional and/or class dialects being added to the text allowing the book to reach a boarder South African audience.

The combination of the storyline and the three components of national identity that have been addressed above create an image of national identity that is in connection with that of both Edensor and Zegeye. This is because the book takes elements of traditional culture within the images and converts them into pop culture, making them more accessible to young children. One image is the picture of the buck that is seen in figure 2. Additionally, it retains the focus of the individual's role in shaping the community and refrains from placing emphasis on the negative aspect of community peer pressure. This is accomplished by telling children to only listen to the positive voices and not the negative, like those that told Shuttleworth that he could never be an astronaut.

Furthermore, what makes the book *Dreamwalking* so extraordinary is that it has the ability to cross-over into other countries' book markets, while keeping its elements of South African national identity. This is important for publishing companies because it means a larger amount of money can made off of the picture book, since it would not require any changes to be able to be understood outside of South Africa. *Dreamwalking* is a good example of how elements of South African national identity can be applied in the use of important South African figures and the universal concept of hope to create a positive sense of South African national identity, as well as a universally understandable children's picture book. In many ways its universality can be attributed to the fact that it follows a common children's storybook plot line that I mentioned above, the main character has a dream, works towards that dream, and then achieves that dream.

### 4.4 *What a Gentleman* by Dianne Case with Pictures by Jo Harvey

*What a Gentleman* is the story of how Nelson Mandela inspires people from around the world through his actions. The book is narrated by the granddaughter who is retelling what her grandmother has told her about all the great and important things that Mandela has accomplished. The plot of the story does not have the typical climax that many people come to expect from a children's book. Instead the story ventures through the numerous good deeds and the inspiration of Nelson Mandela. The book inspires children to follow Nelson Mandela's lead by teaching them to live a positive and productive life. In addition to Mandela, the story also shows two other individually important people in South Africa, Josia Thugwane[102] and Desmond Tutu, as well as, the winning 1995 South Africa Rugby World Cup team. Furthermore, *What a Gentleman* uses various elements of South African national identity throughout the book's illustrations, which utilizes intertextuality, seen below in figure 3. The combination of these elements in the book fit into four of the main categories of national identity; important South African figures, shared history, multiculturalism and hope for the future.




[103] Figure 3

The picture book uses illustrations to illuminate distinctive South African elements of intertextuality, which help to further develop a sense of what it means to be

[102] Josia Thugwane became the first black South African to win a Gold medal at the 1996 Atlanta summer games. Yet all the more remarkable for Thugwane's achievement were the array of circumstances and limitations that had already challenged him in his short lifetime. When he won the Olympic medal, he could not read or write, and lived in a tin shack in one of South Africa's violence-prone black townships. Before the Games, he was still working as a janitor, cleaning toilets and kitchens at Koornfontein Coal Mine for about $330 a month. Just five months earlier, he had been shot in the face in a carjacking. Information from http://www.answers.com/topic/josia-thugwane. (12/01/2010).

[103] Illustration by Jo Harvey. (2008). *What a Gentleman.* Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman

South African. Some of these elements are as simple as using the names of local business and media outlets, such as, Shoprite, South African Airways, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and the Sunday Times. The pictures also use a selection of the eleven national languages both in signs and word bubbles. Some of the word bubbles include lines from the National Anthem while others use phrases that would be shouted at sporting matches. Additionally, it shows different elements of the South African landscape, the national flower, the King Protea, and the national flag of South Africa.

It is easy to see why *What a Gentleman* fits into the category of important South African figures, since the book is about Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first president after the end of apartheid. But because the author Case worked for the betterment of the South Africa people, the story also includes events that fall within shared histories. Shared histories help to create unity because they generally represent a time when the whole country was able to come together for a single cause. These shared histories are represented both by Nelson Mandela the figure and sporting events. Events around Mandela include the day that Mandela become president, and even the mentioning of his time on Robben Island. Although the day that Mandela became president is seen as a happy moment in history and Robben Island has become a dark spot left behind by the apartheid era both have been important in shaping the South Africa of today, and its identity. The sporting events include the 1995 Rugby World Cup Champion South African Springboks, which many view as one of the first signs of unity in the new South Africa. Case explains how South African unity came about within the 1995 Rugby World Cup in simple terms that any child should be able to understand, through the use of Mandela. As the granddaughter states in the story, "My grandmother says Mr. Mandela is an inspiring person. 'He specially wore a Springbok jersey when he watched the final of the Rugby World Cup.' 'That is why we won!' she says."[104] Mandela wearing the Springbok jersey is seen as a sign of the uniting of the nation, since rugby had mainly been viewed as a white sport. The other sporting event that has created shared history is Josia Thugwane who won gold for long-distance running at the Atlanta Olympic Games.

Case uses Mandela's actions to inspire hope for the future. These actions vary to include the way in which Mandela helps everyday people in need, to the important role

[104] Case, Dianne. (2008). *What a Gentleman.* Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman. p 10-1.

he places on children. This is represented by a combination of the author's words and the illustrator, Jo Harvey's, pictures. The combination creates a situation where Case's words only tell the smallest part of the story, with most of the story being represented in the pictures. An example of this is when Case discusses some of the impacts Mandela has had on the community:

> My grandmother says Mr. Mandela cares about ordinary people. 'He goes out of his way to help where he can,' she says. My grandmother says Mr. Mandela believes children are special people. 'That is why children all over South Africa love him so much,' she says.[105]

It is almost as if the pictures really tell the story and the words are there only to provide clarification to the story. However, this combination allows for additional elements of national identity, especially images of hope to be included within the book. An example of such an image is two men in the crowd at the Atlanta Olympic Games holding a sign saying "Cape Town 2008" referring to South Africa's bid for the 2008 summer games. Even though South Africa did not win the bid for the 2008 games, it shows the hope and pride that South Africans have for their country.

The book also uses the illustrations to show multicultural diversity. Every race appears to be represented within the pictures interacting together. Good examples of these interactions are the pages that show Mandela on a playground and Mandela's birthday party with all the children that are invited. When looking at the pictures you see kids being stereotypical kids, all playing together and just having fun. Additionally, the book shows children in wheelchairs and on crutches in addition to able-bodied children. This provides a tool to help children understand that another child maybe disabled but does not mean that they are not important or do not like the same things. What adds to the ability of the book to connect with children is that the book is written in the register of a child when the granddaughter is talking and in the register of the grandmother when she is talking, all of which are familiar to most children. The combination of these categories, as told through Nelson Mandela's inspirational ability, helps to provide the tools needed to bring about discussion amongst children (and adults) and can help to build a positive unified sense of national identity.

[105] Ibid, p 5-7.

Even though *What a Gentleman* focuses on the impact that Mandela has had on the community, the book creates an image of national identity that combines both Zegeye and Chipkin's definitions of national identity. *What a Gentleman* shows the impact that the individual can have on the community and to create change. It also demonstrates the importance of the community on the individual. By striking the intricate balance between the two definitions, Case is able to show the child-reader both the importance of them as an individual and the importance of the community around them. The book shows that without the community the individual has no place and without the individual, then the community is lacking. In *What a Gentleman,* the individual is represented by Nelson Mandela and the community is South African society as a whole.

Since Nelson Mandela has become an important world figure, in addition to being an important South African figure, the book does offer a chance for international publishing, which is becoming ever more important in order for books to make a profit. However, *What a Gentleman* uses intertextuality in a way that only translates within a South African society, which makes it difficult to transition into other markets. The intertextuality of the book would create a scenario were children within in South Africa will interpret the book in a completely different way than children outside of South Africa. This is because children from outside of South Africa would not be able to understand the different elements of intertextuality that are present in the book. However, children from outside of South Africa would be able to learn more about Nelson Mandela and be provided a view into the world of South Africa.



### 4.5 *Fynbos Fairies* by Antije Krog with Pictures by Fiona Moodie

*Fynbos Fairies* is a collection of poems mainly about South African plant life, with one poem being about a bird that many South Africans see almost every day. The poems were originally written in Afrikaans by Antjie Krog and were translated into English by Gus Ferguson. The plants that Krog has written about in her poems are found mostly within the Western Cape region of the country, in what makes up the Cape Floral Kingdom. This kingdom is consided unique to South Africa, which is why places like Cape Point National Park and Kristenbosch Botanical Gardens in the Western Cape are important

conservation zones in South Africa. The book has sixteen poems that are accompanied by life-like painted images of the plants and animals within each poem. This provides a fun way to introduce children to some of the unique plants within their country. This is why *Fynbos Fairies* falls into the category of South African plants and animals.

*Fynbos Fairies* takes a different approach than the other five books in presenting elements of South African national identity by using only two of the five categories that I listed above. By the incorporation of the fairies that are said to live amongst each of the plants, the artist, Fiona Moodie, is able to represent the category of multiculturalism, seen in figure 4, and fairies of different ages. The fairies range in age from babies to a grandma fairy, yet all of them are important. This helps to teach children that no matter what age a person is they remain important.

[106] Figure 4

Both Krog and Moodie show the reader different lessons within each poem. Some of these lessons are about South African plants and animals, while others are moral. An example of a moral story is found in the poem "Pincushion Pixie." This poem tells the story of the pin pixie, who lives on the silver tree, and how she has to sew a dress for the

[106] Illustration by Fiona Moody. (2007). *Fynbos Fairies.* South Africa: Umuzi.

fynbos queen who is ungrateful towards the pin pixie. The last three stanzas of the poem show the queens actions and the hurt of the pin pixie:

"This morning the pixie pricked her thumb and it bled
and droplets of blood stained the Queen's dress red.

But lucky the Queen—who's haughty and vain—
didn't notice the blots or her seamstress's pain.

The pixie, embarrassed, gripped her sore thumb
till the bleeding stopped and the thumb went numb."[107]

This excerpt from the poem shows how Krog was able to incorporate more than just lessons on South African plants and animals into her poems, but lessons on how, or not to in this instance, treat other people. This is important to the socializing aspect of children's literature, teaching children what is considered the norms of society.

The main category of South African national identity that Krog uses is that of South African plant and animal life. In each poem it is almost like she is telling the secret of each plant and the animals that live amongst it. While at the same time, Moodie gives the reader an insight into this secret world, which they cannot see in everyday life, through her illustrations. The illustrations are an important element to this book's educational ability since each flower and animal is painted as if it where to be found in a book of botany or zoology. Additionally, Krog has placed the scientific names of each plant next to the pictures and the inside covers of the book are the images of the animals with their scientific names below. This helps to create the feeling of an old botany or zoology book. In each poem, Krog describes the plant and usually adds information about an animal or insect that likes the plant in the poem.

Perhaps, one of the most important poems to South African national identity is the one about the national flower the king protea. Within the first three stanzas of this poem Krog has already given the reader a description of the plant, as well as information about a bird that likes the king protea:

"The Protea elf in the protea crown
lazes at ease in the soft pink down

but he is the one who frightens away
the greedy white-eyes, he keeps them at bay.

[107] Krog, Antjie. (2007). *Fynbos Fairies.* South Africa: Umuzi, p 16.

Who slices through the sugarbird's tongue?
(so sad a bird should die so young)

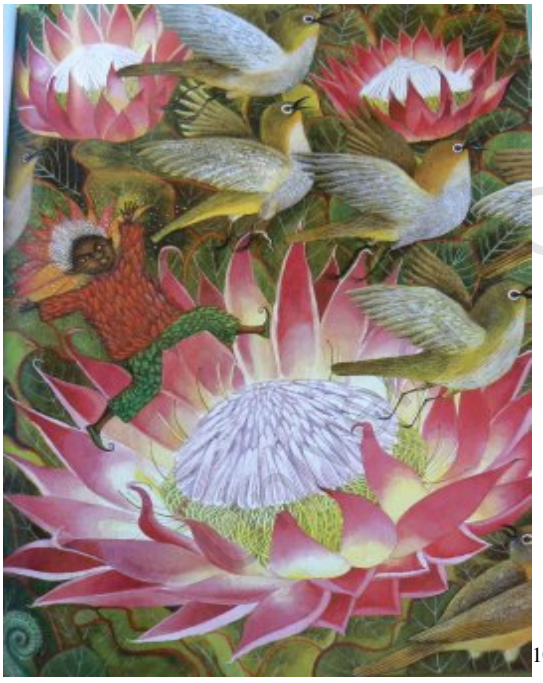
Who nuzzles the King with his elfin lips
and strokes his leaves with their soft pink tips?

Who bays like a hound to sound the alarm
when bush fire crackles, breaking breaking the clam?

He is the protector, King Protea's Knight,
a passionate warrior eager to fight.

"Without him," says the King, "I'm not myself,
I depend on my fiery Protea elf."[108]

This poem shows key elements about the king protea, which are then translated into the illustration by Moodie.



[109] Figure 5

However, without an adult to explain the importance of the king protea as South Africa's national flower, the child will only learn how to recognize the plant. That is the case with all of the poems in *Fynbos Fairies*; it requires an adult to teach the child why these plants and animals are important to South Africa and how many are unique to South Africa.

[108] Ibid, p 12.
[109] Illustration by Fiona Moody. (2007). *Fynbos Fairies.* South Africa: Umuzi.

*Fynbos Fairies* does not fit within the definition of national identity that is presented by both Chipkin and Zegeye. This is mainly due to the focus of the book being about plants and animals, instead of an individual or group of people. However, it does bring the traditional study of botany and zoology into pop cultural which loosely fits into Edensor's view of regenerating national identity. Besides regenerating the old study of botany and zoology the book also introduces the child reader to a different genre, poetry. Although it is the subject of the poems botany is what ultimately connects *Fynbos Fairies* to Edensor's view of regenerating national identity. Additionally, the use of poetry and the subject matter dictates the register in which the book it written, that of a more academic register then a child hears everyday.

Since *Fynbos Fairies* only focuses on the plants and animals with little life lessons, it can easily be translated into other countries children's book markets. This is one of the more subtle ways in which to address element of national identity within the South African children's book industry. However, only if parents or other adults are willing to explain the importance of these plants and animals to South Africa, can it be a tool to teach about nature that is unique to South Africa. This can help to develop pride in South African wildlife and encourage the further conservation of places like Cape Point National Park and Kristenbosch Botanical Gardens for future generations. The book *Fynbos Fairies* is a departure for the Author Antjie Krog, who has written adult novels about transformation in South Africa, such as *Country of my Skull* and *A Change of Tongue*. However, if you read closely you can feel and see, within the pictures, elements of transformation and even hope, in the simple fact that cultural diversity is represented.



### 4.6 *The Day Gogo Went to Vote: 27 April 1994* by Elinor Batezat Sisulu with Pictures by Sharon Willson

*The Day Gogo Went to Vote* is the only book analyzed that neither the author nor the artist is South African. However, the author of the book is originally from Zimbabwe and has moved to South Africa, creating elements of what Lathey refers to as border crossing. However, this book was chosen for its topic: the historic 1994 South African election marking the end of apartheid. Additionally, since the author has experienced the

Zimbabwe elections marking the end of Zimbabwe's white rule in 1980, she is able to bring a unique perspective to the event. The storyline of the book merges both the old South Africa with the new emerging South Africa.

This is accomplished with the great-granddaughter, who is six years old, telling the story of when her great-grandmother, who is 100 years old, went to vote and the days leading up to the election. The great-grandmother, Gogo, at the beginning of the story is telling her great-granddaughter, Thembi, stories of the past, both before and during the time of apartheid, representing the old South Africa. When the date for the first universally democratic election is announced and the excitement that Gogo and her family experiences at being able to vote for the first time represents the hope for the future. Along the way to vote, Gogo experiences the problem of how to get to the polling stations. In order for Gogo to be able to vote the community around her pulls together and finds a solution, that their neighbor will drive her. This shows one of the positive stereotypes of the township communities, in which Gogo and Thembi had to live in during the apartheid era, which can be replicated throughout South Africa. When the neighbor drives Gogo and Thembi to the voting station, Thembi learns about the electoral process. The next day, she is able to share everything she learned when her picture appears in the newspaper. Additionally, the pictures add another dimension to the text with the pictures starting out dark, see figure 6, and at the start of the book before the elections are declared to lighter and brighter at the end of the book during the election period. In a way this provides the child subconsciously with the information that before the elections life was hard and had little hope for Gogo and Thembi, but as independence grew closer life started to gain hope and become happier.

[110] Figure 6

In addition to the two main categories of shared histories and hope for the future, are the lessons about the South African voting system, through the pictures and Thembi's questions. This is an important element of the story since it teaches children in terms that they can understand about the process of voting and the age of suffrage in South Africa. One way the pictures aid in understanding is that they show all voting staff wearing blue bands that read IEC[111] around their arms. Another way that children are able to learn is through the questions that Thembi asks the voting staff. Children are able to relate to the questions that Thembi asks since they are written in the register of a child and the answers are given in a similar register of a primary school teacher. A great example of how Thembi's questions explain elements of the voting system is when she asks about the ink that is placed on your hand after voting:

> "Gogo showed her identity book to the voting officers. They then put Gogo's hand under a machine. I asked them what it was for.
>
> 'It is an ultraviolet machine,' explained the presiding officer.
>
> 'It is against the law to vote twice. This machine helps us make sure that each person votes only once. Look at your Gogo's hands. Now

[110] Illustration by Sharon Willson. (1997). *The day Gogo Went to Vote: 27 April 1994.* Cape Town: Tafelberg: Published in conjunction with the Centre for South African Politics at the University of Stellenbosch.
[111] Independent Electoral Commission.

> when we put this colorless liquid on Gogo's hands and put them under the machine for the second time, what do you see?'
>
> 'Her hands look blue! Why is that' I asked.
>
> 'Because that liquid is invisible ink. You can see it only under the machine. It cannot be washed off and will fade away only after three days. By that time, the elections will be over."[112]

Thembi's questions, such as the one above, help children to understand their own voting system in their own terms. This allows for children to better understand the voting system and have pride in their electoral process.

Beyond the lessons about the South African electoral process, the book shows one of the first events of shared histories within the new South Africa, and the hope for the future that the elections brought to the country. The peaceful 1994 elections marked a change for South Africa, especially for the African, Indian, and Coloured (those that are of mixed race) people. The importance of this election to those who could previously not vote is expressed by Gogo to her great-granddaughter:

> "Gogo told me, 'Thembi, black people in South Africa have fought for many years for the right to vote. This is the first time we have a chance to vote for our own leaders, and it might be my last. That is why I must vote, no matter how many miles I have to walk, no matter how long I have to stand in line!'—[113]

Gogo tells the children that this election must be extremely important if a one hundred year old woman is willing to walk for miles and wait in a long line just for her chance to vote. If children can understand how everyone came together to vote in 1994 and what that election meant for South Africa, it can help keep the shared history of the election for future generations to look back on. The 1994 election shows what South Africans can achieve together and was one of the first steps towards healing and a positive sense of national identity for generations to come.



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[112] Sisulu, Elinor Batezat. (1997). *The day Gogo Went to Vote: 27 April 1994.* Cape Town: Tafelberg: Published in conjunction with the Centre for South African Politics at the University of Stellenbosch.
[113] Ibid.

Hope for the future, however, is not only expressed in the election and the act of voting, but in the little girl of Thembi. Thembi really does represent the future of South Africa like all the children that read the book. Children of all races and classes can relate to Thembi and her inquisitive nature. Some of the last lines in *The Day Gogo Went to Vote* show Thembi's connection with the hope for the future of South Africa:

> "The next day there was a picture of Gogo and me in the newspaper. My cousins read aloud the words above the picture: 'The past and the future: hundred-year-old voter Mrs. Mokoena accompanied by six-year-old great-granddaughter, Thembi."[114]

The story shows that children are the hope for the future of South Africa through Thembi's role within the book.

*The Day Gogo Went to Vote* acknowledges the impact that society has on the individual, but also the individual's ability to transform the society around them through the right to vote. However, the community and the support of the community remains a dominant theme throughout the book which agrees more with Chipkin's definition of national identity then that of Zegeye. Edensor's view of regenerating the old elements of national identity through the medium of pop culture does not apply in the case of *The Day Gogo Went to Vote* since it is about an individual event in South Africa's history. Nevertheless, it does show children the importance of the community coming together to help support each other, which has been lost within some areas of South African society.

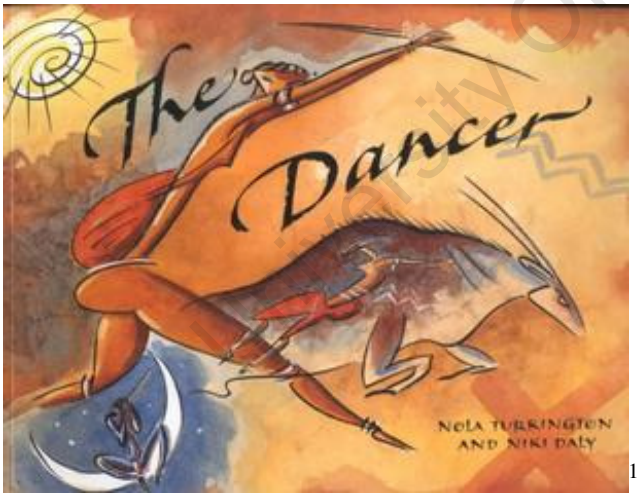
Even though, *The Day Gogo Went to Vote* is an important story that needs to be told, the story does lack the ability to be translated into other countries children's book markets. With this being said, the content of the story, provides an easy way to introduce South African children both to their history and to a part of the South African political process. For children outside of South Africa, it would be able to teach them about the new South Africa and would provide a tool to compare their election process to South Africa's. This book provides a tool in South African classrooms to introduce the subjects of South African history and the electoral process with children between first and third grade. For children outside of South Africa, it would be able to teach them about the new

[114] Ibid.

South Africa and would provide a tool to compare their election process to South Africa's.

### 4.7 *The Dancer* by Nola Turkington and Niki Daly with Pictures by Niki Daly

*The Dancer* is the only book out of the six that are analyzed that tells a traditional South African folktale, but it also provides lessons for today. The book keeps with the traditional feel of the San people by using earth tone colours and images that mimic the style of cave paintings, see figure 7 below. *The Dancer* tells a story about a young girl who knows several traditional dances and wants to learn the dance of the rainbull. When the rain does not fall in the Kalahari and the men cannot reach the rainmaker in time, Bau, the young girl, goes to find the rainmaiden with the help of her grandmother. Along the journey to the rainmaiden, Bau returns as a woman. In Bau's journey to become a woman, she is faced with obstacles she has to overcome, from a lion to hunger. The book teaches through Bau's journey the importance of family and their guidance in life, told in the method of a traditional South African folktale.




[115] Figure 7

Within the tale of Bau's quest, children learn about the landscape of the Kalahari Desert, its animals, and some of the traditional beliefs of the San people and how they lived. However, traditional tales although important to understand a country's past, do not always help in the development of national identity. What makes this story capable of

[115] Illustration by Niki Daly. (2000). *The Dancer.* London: Frances Lincoln.

helping develop a sense of national identity is it ability to show life in the South African desert alongside the spiritual beliefs of the San people. Barrett explains that increased geographical knowledge, such as that of the Kalahari, is directly linked to national identity creation. It also shows children that no matter what age, someone can make a difference within their community.

The tale expresses all of these lessons in the traditional story about the need for rain and how the people of the desert area work to insure that the rain will come. Furthermore, the book tells the tale of the cycle of life, accomplished through the death of the grandmother and the transformation of her granddaughter into womanhood. The reader sees this cycle when Bau returns from her journey to dance with the rainmaiden:

> "When Bau came to the great baobob, she saw on the ground her grandmother's gorah. And at once Bau knew that her grandmother had gone to her last resting-place in the curve of the moon. […] 'Dance, Bau, dance!' sang her mother. Bau sprang into the open, then dipped and turned. Her hands, like horns, swept gracefully through the air. A- glitter with flickering firelight, she danced a new dance. And as she moved, her mother noticed that Bau no longer danced like a child."[116]

The book contains a glossary at the end to explain the meaning of some of the words that children would typically not hear. This includes words like baobob and gorah that are found in the passage above. This is because the book is written in a register containing words that are unique to South Africa.

*The Dancer* is a clear example of Edensor's regeneration of traditional elements of society into pop culture. Furthermore, within the San community, the community plays a larger role than that of the individual. Even, though the individual can accomplish great things, they do so for the greater good of the community. This definition is a clear example of Zegeye's relationship between the individual and the group in understanding a nation's national identity. Chipkin's view of national identity is also met because the people of the San community are all sharing the common mission to ask the rainbull for rain.

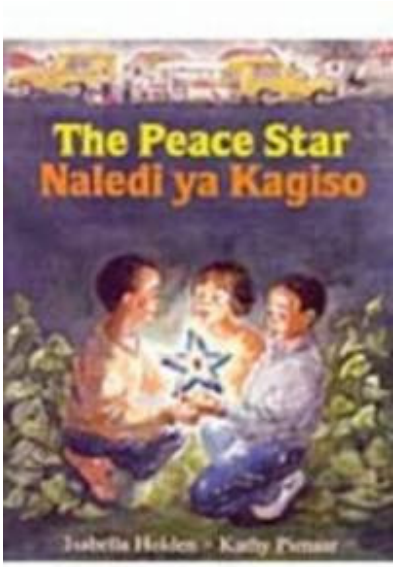
[116] Turkington, Nola; Daly, Niki. (2000). *The Dancer.* London: Frances Lincoln.

The multicultural element within the traditional South African folktale is perhaps what makes them important for the development of a positive unified sense of national identity. However, the subject matter of the book also makes it ideal for international publishing, which can be seen in the fact that the book has already entered other countries' children's book markets, like that of the United Kingdom. These may be related to the popularity of South African children's book writer and illustrator Niki Daly whose publicist is from the United Kingdom. This shows that traditional South African folktales have a market within the wider international context and can also help to teach multicultural understanding amongst South African children. As we have seen, multicultural understanding is an important element in any nation that has more then one ethnicity within its boarders. The sooner lessons of understanding can be taught to children; the more likely they are to practice such lessons, and stories like *The Dancer* is one way to help introduce such understanding at an early age.

### 4.8 *The Peace Star* by Isabella Holden with Pictures by Kathy Pienaar

*The Peace Star* is a unique South African children's book because it is a dual language text. *The Peace Star* is published in three different language combinations. This is achieved by having the text written in English, for example, at the top and then in Xhosa below the English. However, the language of the text is not the only aspect of the book that helps to create a unified sense of national identity, but the storyline of the text. The story is about two best friends, Philani and Rebecca, and the realities that some children face in South Africa. Through the characters of Philani, Rebecca, and later Sipho, children learn about their rights and responsibilities. Within the first chapter of the story, Philani and Rebecca learn why their parents have rules for their protection and the importance of following the rules, when Rebecca and Philani leave their yards without permission. In the second chapter, we are introduced to Sipho, whose parents argue and fight with each other, as well as Sipho, which scares him. Through Sipho's home experience, children reading the book are educated about their right to feel safe and their

ability to call the childline,[117] which will help them and their families, if they do not feel safe. The story also provides the number to childline. In the third chapter, the children decide to clean up the community by building a park and getting the community involved in helping. This chapter teaches children that they have the right to a safe and clean place to play. Throughout the story, tying each chapter together is the Peace Star, which is a flower that the children discovered in the first chapter when they broke the rules by leaving their yards, see figure 7 below.




[118] Figure 7

The Peace Star within the book represents the hope for the future, which is one of the elements of building a positive unified sense of national identity. The Peace Star is used to spread peace within the community and reduce fighting and violence. This is shown within the pictures and the text by the spread of the Peace gardens throughout the community with signs saying: "Peace Garden No fighting here." The children show other children that fighting is not the answer to the problem, even if they are angry. This is clearly seen when the children had finished building the Peace Park and another boy Nicky and his gang destroy all their hard work:

[117] Childline is a non-profit organization within South Africa, that works to protect all children from violence, as well as, creating a culture of children's rights within South Africa. Information from http://www.childlinesa.org.za/. (12/01/2010).
[118] Illustration by Kathy Pienaar. (1997). *The Peace Star*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers: A Project of the Children's Rights Centre.

"We could fix the park, but Nicky will just come back," said Philani.

"This is a difficult problem. What can we do about it?" asked Themba.

The children decided they would talk to Nicky, and the next day Themba went along with them.

"Come with us, Nicky," said Philani.

"Why should I go with you?" answered Nicky.

"We want to show you a miracle," said Sipho.

Nicky was doubtful but curious, so he went along. They showed him the Peace Star that he had crashed the day before. A beautiful new flower had opened. As Nicky looked at it his heart opened too.

"I'm sorry we were so mean," he said. "It's just that this is our special place and we got angry."

"We can all share it," said Sipho.

Nicky agreed to help fix the park.[119]

This interaction between the children about fixing the park shows how conversation is a more productive way to resolve problems. This lesson is important for the children of South Africa, in a country that has high rates of crime and violence. The images that accompany the text also express this hope for the future. You can see that before the Peace Star, the pictures lack color and are mainly earth tones. As the Peace Star spreads and the hope that it brings the pictures become lighter and more colorful.

The best way to explain the importance of this story to the future of South Africa and its ability to teach young children about their South African identity is expressed in The Children's Rights Centre's note at the end of story:

> "We hope that you will use *The Peace Star* to help children think about peace and to build the attitudes that lead to peace in their lives. You can discuss it with children and encourage them to explore their own ideas about peace in role-play, art-work, songs and concrete activities. You may like to take up incidents in the story that show children as decision-makers and peace- makers. You may like to discuss the characters in the

[119] Holden, Isabella. (1997). *The Peace Star*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers: A Project of the Children's Rights Centre.

> story so as to encourage acceptance of various cultures and background. There are both boys and girls as role- models, and also a picture of a child in a wheelchair as one of the group in the Peace Park story."[120]

This note shows how the story can be used as an affective tool to help spread elements like hope for the future and multiculturalism. This book does not only teach children about their rights and responsibilities about but also teaches parents and other adults about the rights and responsibilities of children. This is achieved by using a register in which a child would use, simplistic in nature and to the point. However, it does avoid using hurtful language and offers children alternative language tools to solve problems, adding to the socializing factor of the book.

The socializing nature of the book is carried over into the overall message of the story. One message is the impact that the individual can have on the community. This is shown in the changes of the community through the power of a small group of individuals. This also shows the positive affect that children can have on the community around them and what positive peer pressure can achieve. The more people to adopt positive changes individually, the greater impact the change has in the community. This view combines what both Chipkin and Zegeye state about national identity and the role of the individual versus that of the community. *The Peace Star* shows that both the individual and the community are important and without one you cannot have the other and that both are needed to create a lasting change. Additionally, it shows the mission of the community, as a whole, in the creation of a peaceful environment, which connects directly with Chipkin. Edensor's view does play a role in the message of the text within the first chapter explaining the need for the rules that parents create for children. The relationship between the child and the parent that is depicted is overall that of the traditional relationship; however it is shown within the realities that face South Africa of today. For this reason, *The Peace Star* utilizes the key elements of South African national identity as addressed by Chipkin, Zegeye, and Edensor.

However, because the nature of the book is a uniquely South African story, it is unable to be translated into the international children's books market. If it was not for the fact that the book *The Peace Star* was a project of the Children's Rights Centre, it may

[120] Ibid.

not have ever been published. Stories like this one need to be told to help inform children about their rights and responsibilities, as well as what they can do if their rights are being infringed upon. The story teaches children how they can help to develop a better community and affect their own lives for the better. Even though this story does not translate into international children's book markets, there is a large need for this type of story within South Africa and with the help of non-profit organizations, like the Children's Rights Centre, texts like this one can continue to be written and published for their South African audiences. Thus, texts like this create further tools for the development of a positive sense of unified national identity.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

Children's picture books are unable to reach their full potential in identity formation without adult/child discussion. Within this chapter, I will discuss how the children's picture books examined can be applied as tools in the development of identity formation in children. Additionally, I address the issue of the revised national curriculum and how children's literature, in particular picture books, can be used to fill in the gaps created at the foundational phase. Lastly, I explore how the implementation of South African children's literature can effect the development of an overarching South African national identity and how this may counter the effects of sociocultural divides.

### 5.1 Applying Children's Picture Books in National Identity Creation

Even though it is hard to say the exact benefits of national identity in children's picture books within developing nations, we do understand some of the benefits of early exposure to one's national identity. Additionally, with careful examination of most children's picture books researchers can gain greater knowledge about the prevailing feelings of the time in which the book was written. I have already briefly touched on the impact of cognitive behavior and it relationship to children's development above, but let me expand on cognitive behavior and children's literature. I will be looking chiefly at the possible impact of national identity in South African children's picture books on the classroom alongside the new education program.

The six books that have been analyzed show six different categories or elements of national identity that are present within children's literature. These categories help to provide the tools for analyzing national identity in South African children's picture books and supply a means to begin classroom discussion. With the education system in South Africa being forced to focus on the basics of reading, writing, and mathematics, there is little time left for lessons on what it means to be South African at the primary school level. However, by introducing pictures books like *Dreamwalking* and the others to the classroom during story time, with a teacher led discussion, the gap created in the system can begin to close.

For children's picture books to be able to bridge the gap that has been created, a complex process takes place in the child's mind. This process occurs through cognitive level changes in the child, in relation to their understanding of national identity, through a combination of factors. One way that children's picture books can be used is to promote positive changes to a child's concept of what it means to belong to a national in-group. This is due to what Barrett found to be a direct relationship between national geographical knowledge and a child's sense of national identity. Picture books provide the ideal tool for exploring the different geographical landscapes of a nation, as seen in both *Fynbos Fairies* and *The Dancer*. Yet both books require some level of either previous knowledge on the part of the child-reader or further explanation from a teacher or adult to fully understand the geographical importance of each book. Once the previous knowledge is in place the pictures are able to show the child what the land actually looks like while the text explains key elements about the area. Without pictures young children would not be able to fully understand the geographical differences within South Africa.

A key factor in the Barrett findings that specifically affects South Africa is the impact of sociocultural settings. This is due to the fact that South Africa still remains fragmented along sociocultural lines. According to Barrett's findings:

> These findings imply that the development of national identity is not driven only by cognitive changes which occur to the way in which the child is able to conceptualise the social world at different ages, but also by social influences. Thus, many of the changes which occur between 5 and 11 years of age are probably a consequence of the child's increasing ability across this age range to conceptualise large-scale social groups such as national groups. At the same time, however, the way in which even these cognitively-driven changes are expressed within any given child is modulated and affected by the specific sociocultural setting within which the child lives.[121]

Children's picture books are only a tool in which to help develop a child's sense of national identity and both sociocultural setting and social influence play important roles.

[121] Barrett, Martyn. (2000). "The Development of National Identity in Childhood and Adolescence." *Conference papers from the Department of Psychology.* Paper 5. http://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/psyconferencepapers/5. (12/01/2010).

However, if children's picture books like *What a Gentleman*, *The Day Gogo Went to Vote, The Peace Star* and others are incorporated into the South African school curriculum, it offset some of the negative social influences experienced by children.

With some areas of South Africa seeing children's picture books as a luxury item, that cannot be afforded, it is important for the classrooms and schools to provide children with exposure to not only this important literary tool but a tool to build a positive image of both individual and national identity. Without such exposure, the children, in these areas, only interactions with images of identity would come from their sociocultural settings. However, even within the school setting there is a social and economic divide in South Africa with many township schools not being able to afford the luxury of new picture books that are better able to represent the new identity of South Africa. This problem has to be addressed by the education department in South Africa to be able to see the positive impacts that picture books can have on identity formation in young children. Additionally, such children fall behind their wealthier counterparts when it comes to their ability to conceptualize large-scale social groups. Consequently, where positive images of the new South African national identity are most needed, tools like children's picture books play a secondary role to the social influences around them. The new education programs have not been able to meet the needs of the lower sociocultural classes within South Africa.

The new education program and its implications for the development of a multiculturally diverse classroom vary from the language issue, to division of subjects, to its outcome based results. Additionally, there is the problem of over-crowding in government-run schools from lack of teachers and availability of funds that learners have to contend. Currently, there are eight subject areas in which children are instructed: languages, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, technology, economic management sciences, life orientation, and lastly arts and culture. Elements of national identity formation would be found in both social sciences and life orientation subject areas. However, in the new revised national curriculum not all eight subjects are taught at the primary level. According to the link provided by the South African ministry of education:

> In the Foundation Phase, there are three learning programmes: Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills. In the Intermediate Phase, Languages and Mathematics are distinct learning programmes. Other integrated learning programmes may be developed by schools with the approval of the provincial departments of education. In the Senior Phase, there are eight learning programmes, each based on one learning area.[122]

The revised national curriculum statement goes on to divide how much time should be spent on each subject area. In the foundational phase, which would be primary school level, learners are only focusing on three core subject areas with 40 percent of the time being spent on literacy, 35 percent on numeracy, and only 25 percent on life skills.

With only 25 percent of the school curriculum being spent on life skills, which also has to focus on issues of personal health and physical development, the topic of national identity formation is not being addressed at the level necessary. This is where children's picture books can perform a dual role both within literacy and life skills. As stated earlier, cognitive development is enhanced when children read literature increasing vocabulary skills and that cognitive development plays a key role in identity formation. Thus, children's picture books can be used as a tool to bring positive national identity formation into the classroom at an earlier age through literacy, instead of waiting until a learner reaches high school to be taught social sciences. We have seen in the limited number of studies that have been completed on national identity formation in young children that the concept of identity begins around the age of five: thus, making the introduction of positive images of national identity important from an early age. Introducing positive images of South African national identity at a primary level can help to create a united positive sense of what it means to be South African. By adding picture books like the ones analyzed above schools would not only be able to increase levels of literacy, but also provide positive South African role models and images of the country.



[122] Revised National Curriculum Statement. http://www.mml.co.za/revised_national_curriculum_statement.htm#LearningAreas. (12/01/2010).

## 5.2 Summary

National identity is defined as the image of a nation from culture and language to politics. National identity can either be positive or negative depending on which elements of a nation's identity a country chooses to embrace. In South Africa, we have seen a fragmented identity based on ethnic background instead of the positive unified national identity needed to heal the nation, creating one South Africa. One way in which to develop a positive unified sense of national identity is to start from an early age with tools, such as children's picture books. Many South African children's picture books contain elements of national identity beyond the six that were analyzed; however the level of national identity varies from book to book. The sampling of South African children's picture books that I analyzed are readily available in the market and can easily be used as tools in the development of a positive sense of unified national identity.

The reason why picture books are vital to filling the critical gap in national identity development within South Africa is because of the dual role that they can play within the new educational curriculum. As I stated earlier, picture books play a key function in child development and cognitive development through increasing vocabulary levels and teaching children about social norms. This allows children's picture books to not only teach literacy, but also what it means to be South African. This is accomplished through different elements of national identity which are generally present in most children's picture books through intertextuality, syntax and ideology. By analyzing these components, we can see the underlining elements of national identity that are present in the country at the time the book was written. Additionally, these components can be used to teach children what it means to belong to different national cultures, in the hope to create better understanding and appreciation for all South Africans.

By using picture books as a tool to help build a positive sense of national identity at an early age when identity is beginning to form, there is an increased chance of creating the change necessary to move away from the fragmented identity based on ethnic background. This is because picture books fit within the mass publication category that, according to Anderson, is a critical element in developing an 'imagined community.' By developing an 'imagined community,' South Africa can form and

overarching sense of national identity that would go against what Gellner refers to as 'violations of nationalist principles.' However, South Africa's 'imagined community' has to contend with forces of globalization, which is why providing increased access and publication of South African children's literature is more important today then ever.

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